

Deadliest attack in Iraq this year kills 79, wounds 160; more violence feared

COA: Joc-joc added names to recipients' list of P728M fund

Campbell grabs Masters lead; Singh, Couples close behind

Why PDI's man IN Hollywood has got best job in the world

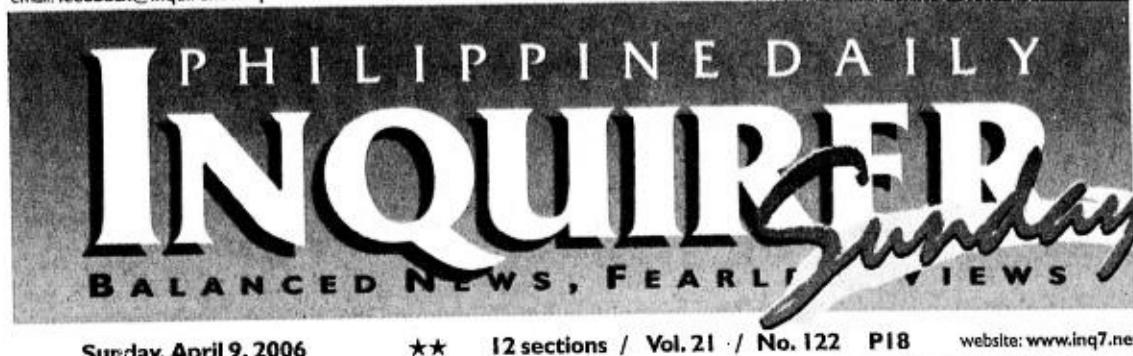
Gonzalez's new gem: GMA has balls, Thaksin doesn't



By Armand N. Nocum

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's got balls; resigned Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra hasn't got any. This was according GONZALEZ'S/A13

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph



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★★

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Pacquiao's next fight with ex-girlfriend's ma

By Gerry Lirio

HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE THE MOTHER OF A woman scorned.

The mother of the former girlfriend of Manny Pacquiao has flown to Los Angeles, California, for a confrontation with the boxing superstar over the plight of her daughter and grandson.

In an overseas phone interview with the INQUIRER PACQUIAO'S/A13

Bernas: GMA insulting SC

Palace tries to ease CBCP fears; Gonzalez hits 'leftists' in Church

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Armand N. Nocum
in Manila
Jolene Bulambot and Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

A LEADING CONSTITUTIONALIST YESTERDAY publicly rebuked President Macapagal-Arroyo for backing the signature campaign to change the Constitution, even as Malacañang pledged the people's will would prevail on the issue.

"Parang binabastos ng Presidente ang Supreme Court nyan when the Supreme Court said 'no' and the President said 'go ahead' (It seems the President is insulting the Supreme Court)," Fr. Joaquin Bernas, one of the framers of the 1987 Constitution, said during a forum on the Charter held in Cebu City.

Bernas said Ms Arroyo's action could not be described any other way as she knew full well that the Supreme Court had already ruled in 1997 that an enabling law was needed to amend the Charter through a people's initiative.

Bernas spoke a day after the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines voiced alarm over the Palace-backed signature campaign

to support the shift from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government. The shift would allow Ms Arroyo to rule as president and prime minister until at least 2010.

Reacting to the CBCP statement, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said: "We respect the views expressed by the CBCP on the people's initiative and we assure them that the government shares the same ideals of freedom and democracy. Just like the Church, we also listen to the voice of the people and we will strive to serve their paramount interests."

"We will invoke transparency in this undertaking and we will make sure that the authentic will of the people will prevail," he said

BERNAS/A4



THE RITES OF HOLY WEEK. Christians today mark Palm Sunday also known as Passion Sunday, the start of the commemoration of the agony and death of Jesus Christ. The palm fronds symbolize Jesus's entry into Jerusalem wildly welcomed with hosannas and palms waving in triumph by the very people, who five days later, would just as loudly demand that Pontius Pilate crucify Him.

Death March vets can no longer walk to own tribute

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—UNDER Japanese bayonets 64 years ago, they were forced to walk the long road to a concentration camp in Tarlac.

Now the survivors of that infamous Death March are hard put to even negotiate the 20-meter "Walk with the Heroes" held right where the horror began.

"We're too old now. We're weak and sick," said Abraham Regala, commander of the Second Mariveles Veterans Post.

Regala, now 78, said all he could do was pass the peace torch to the leaders of the more than 150 sprinters who retraced the Death March.

The Japanese Imperial Army forced some 300,000 Filipino and American guerrillas to walk to the Tarlac concentration camp after Bataan fell to Japanese forces on April 9, 1942.

The march took less than a week, but thousands died by the roadside of hunger, wounds, disease or were bayoneted on the spot by their Japanese guards.

The 102-kilometer "Araw ng DEATH/A8

Judas Gospel won't shake Christian faith

By Fr. Randolph C. Flores, SVD
Contributor

(The author is a professor at the Divine Word Seminary in Tagaytay, currently doing research at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome.)

AMONG FILIPINOS, JUDAS, IS PERHAPS the least liked character in the Bible.

Our Pasyon (the life of Christ in vernacular verse) scorns Judas as a hayop, tam-

palasan, puno ng kasakiman (beast, wicked, greedy), etc. His image is absent from the processions during Good Friday. When riding in Jeeps, we are warned: "God knows Judas not pay."

COMMENTARY

As a priest, I have not had the occasion to baptize a child named Judas, although I have baptized children with names like Osama, Bin Laden, Saddam and Hitler.

I find the discovery of the controversial "Gospel of Judas"—made public Thursday in

Washington DC by the National Geographic Society—as timely.

The Judas gospel will have its global premiere today—the start of Holy Week—on the National Geographic Channel. Holy Week is the time we Christians "weep" for Jesus and scorn Judas.

It also rides high on the economic success of "The Da Vinci Code," the book and soon-to-be-released movie. The novel, whose author Dan Brown has been acquitted of copyright

JUDAS/A8

GMA 7 VS ABS-CBN (AGAIN) Networks racing to be first on Everest

By Alcuin Papa

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT FILIPINOS have a fighting chance to reach the peak of Mt. Everest.

But Henry Nakpil, president of the University of the Philippines Mountaineers (UPM), has warned that the intensive coverage by rival broadcast networks of two separate attempts to climb Everest may endanger the climbers' lives.

According to Nakpil, the mountaineering community and the general public are being treated to a spectacle of a "network race" between the two teams being backed by ABS-CBN and GMA 7.

And this, he pointed out, could be dangerous.

"For any climber who is first on Everest, there is the temptation of fame and fortune courtesy of the media—as we have seen in the case of [boxer Manny] Pacquiao. If you believe in the hype and pressure to be first, you can make a wrong decision," Nakpil said on Friday.

He added: "The mere fact that [the climbers] are facing this kind of pressure to be first makes a lot of us in the community very un-



ABS-CBN'S 17-MEMBER FIRST PHILIPPINE MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION TEAM has sent 2 "reconnaissance" climbers to top the summit in the runup to its own scheduled ascent in 2007.

comfortable and concerned.

"Reaching the summit of Mt. Everest does not involve your strength as a climber alone. There are a lot of factors to consider. Even the best prepared

climber in the world can fail because of other factors."

As American mountaineer Jon Krakauer narrated in "Into Thin Air," at least seven people, including two experienced climbers

who were each guiding a group, died in a storm on Everest on May 10, 1996, as a result of wrong decisions.

Three other climbers died in

NETWORKS/A8



GMA 7'S GARDUCE, photographed at a training climb at the Cho Oyu in the Nepal-Tibet border, is now at Base Camp.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will continue to experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CHONA GALANG, PDR RESEARCH/04/09/06

Second FRONT PAGE

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Legazpi Partly Cloudy
Cebu Partly Cloudy

Iloilo/Bacolod Cloudy with Rains
Batas Cloudy with Rains
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Gen. Santos Cloudy with Rains
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COA: Bolante expanded fund list

By Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER AGRICULTURE UNDERSECRETARY Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante added names to the list of recipients of the P728-million fertilizer fund that had not been included in the original list drawn up by the Department of Budget and Management, according to the final Commission on Audit report on the fund scandal.

The COA said the list of proponents that was attached to the budget department's Special Allotment Release Order (Saro) for the P728 million was different from the list in the eventual allocation of the funds.

Moreover, some proponents also received more of the funds than originally allocated to them under the DBM list, the report said.

The COA's final audit report, dated March 31, 2006 and submitted to the Senate last week, said the fertilizer bought with the P728-million fund had been overpriced by 682 percent, or by P128 million.

The report said the Saro for P728 million was released by the DBM to the Department of Agriculture accompanied by Annex A

containing the list of approved recipients.

The records showed, however, that Bolante approved the issuance of an "advice of sub-allotments and notices of transfer allocations" to DA regional field units listing allocations that did not gibe with the original list, the report said.

A table accompanying the final COA report listed the fertilizer recipients that were not in the DBM list.

They included two Metro Manila congressmen (for a total of P8 million), three congressmen and a mayor in the Ilocos region (P11.5 million), two governors in Cagayan Valley (P10 million) and a P5 million allocation for Pampanga that did not have a named proponent.

The table also named at least

26 "proponents" who were included in the DBM list but did not receive fertilizer funds. They included former Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad and Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noy" Aquino III.

Many lawmakers had complained that they were included in the list of proponents that Bolante had submitted to the DBM although they were never consulted or informed that their districts would be receiving fertilizer funds.

The COA table also listed six lawmakers who received additional funds of P13 million.

"The amounts indicated in the name of the proponents were over and above their original allocations in Annex A of the Saro in question," the COA report said.

It implied that some of the projects for which the fertilizer funds were to be used already had allocations in the 2004 national budget under the lawmakers' pork barrel or Priority Development Assistance Fund.

"The (local government units) had, likewise, separate appropriations for their own development projects," the report said.

At the House, the committee on agriculture and food yesterday called on the Ombudsman's office to speed up its investigation into

the alleged fertilizer scam and hold accountable all those found responsible.

Now that the COA has submitted its report to the antigraft body, it was time the legal process began, said Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon, the committee chair.

Macarambon said the House would cooperate in the Ombudsman's probe and expressed confidence the investigation would vindicate the administration congressmen who were unfairly dragged into the controversy to allegedly malign the House and President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Only a thorough investigation by an independent body like the Ombudsman will put an end to this issue. The fertilizer fund scam has hounded the nation like a ghastly ghost and it's time the Ombudsman determines who should be held liable. Let the axe fall where it may," said Macarambon.

Isabela Rep. Edwin Uy, a committee vice chair, said the COA report could provide the Ombudsman with additional leads for the prosecution of those involved in the scam.

"The fertilizer fund issue has long been exploited by the opposition to promote their poll fraud

allegations against the President," Uy said.

"We cannot allow them to continue riding on this issue to discredit the President and her inno-

cent allies in the House, hence an immediate resolution by the Ombudsman is imperative," he said.

With a report from Norman Bordadora

Senate asked to pass '06 budget quickly

ALTHOUGH IT TOOK THE HOUSE of Representatives more than seven months to pass the P1.053-trillion national budget last Wednesday, two administration congressmen yesterday asked the Senate to demonstrate statesmanship by approving the measure quickly before Congress adjourns in June.

Davao Oriental Rep. Joel Mayo Almario said the budget's quick passage through the Senate would prevent the continued operation of the government under a reenacted 2005 budget, which the opposition fears the Arroyo administration could use to fund Charter change.

"By approving the 2006 proposed budget, lawmakers will render the 2005 budget un-operational. Thus, doubts that it will be used for Cha-cha will no longer hound anyone," Almario said in a statement.

Last Thursday, Senate President Manuel Villar accused the House of deliberately passing the budget bill at the last minute, saying the Senate would not have enough time to de-

liberate on the measure, not to mention time for the conference committees of both chambers to reconcile any differences between their versions of the bill.

Congress, which is in recess for Easter, is to resume sessions on May 15 before adjourning on June 10.

Speaker Jose de Venecia, among the most ardent Cha-cha proponents, has said he envisions a new Constitution and a unicameral parliament in place by July.

If the 2006 budget is not passed and signed by the President by then, the Cha-cha opponents "will have no one to blame but the senators," Almario said.

Like Almario, House Deputy Majority Leader Antonio Cerilles asked the Senate to forego its investigations and focus on passage of the budget. "The Senate's expeditious passage of the P1.053-trillion budget measure from the House would affirm their support for national development," Cerilles said.

Norman Bordadora

Rosales: Spread Christ's love thru action

By Jerome Aning

DON'T JUST SAY IT, DO IT.

This is the main theme of Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales's message on Palm Sunday, which the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has also declared as "Alay Kapwa Sunday."

"Can we say we love God if we turn a blind eye to poverty and deaf ears to cries of injustice?" Rosales says in a one-page pastoral letter to be read during Mass at all churches in the archdiocese of Manila today. "Love not with words but in actions and in truth."

He adds: "Prove your integrity through actions and not words.

Spread Christ's message of love not just in words but in deeds."

With the CBCP's declaration of Palm Sunday, which ushers in the Holy Week, as "Alay Kapwa Sunday," all collections at Masses throughout the country today would be put together to fund services for the poor and sustain similar undertakings by various social action centers nationwide organized by or affiliated with the Church.

The social action centers are groups dealing with peace advocacy, democratic governance, ecology, sustainable agriculture and disaster management.

Fr. Anton Pascual of the Catholic charity group Caritas Manila said Rosales and all the bishops were

challenging all Filipinos to live lives of integrity and concern for the common good. The CBCP also instructed the entire Church to lead in the restoration of uprightness.

"The Church holds that lack of integrity is the root cause of our political and social crises," Pascual said. "Dishonesty and moral deterioration are quite evident and our high tolerance for wrongdoing magnifies our degenerated moral values."

In Manila, Alay Kapwa collections and donations would be used to fund the Church's scholarship program for 5,000 poor but deserving students, the operation of 13 parish health clinics and a feeding program for 5,000 malnourished children.

The fund would also be used to

hold job fairs and livelihood programs, microfinance and cooperatives, for paralegal assistance and values formation for prison inmates, for relief for victims of calamities, and for its advocacy on AIDS prevention and assistance to persons living with HIV-AIDS.

Rosales recalled that Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical "Deus Caritas Est," stressed the important role of Caritas and the Church program in responding to the needs of the poor.

"We are called to support these programs and [according to the Pope] contribute by personally doing good, with full commitment and whenever we have the opportunity," the Cardinal said.

Zobel's bodyguard shot

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—A close-in security aide of prominent businessman Iñigo Zobel is in a hospital fighting for his life after he was shot by a fellow bodyguard in Calatagan, Batangas, on Friday.

Chief Supt. Prospero Noble, Calabarzon police director, identified the victim as Sgt. Vene Balbuena, an active member of the Philippine Marines who was assigned as a bodyguard to Zobel.

Noble said Balbuena was shot in the left shoulder by suspect Armando Gaco just outside the

main gate of the Zobel-owned Bay Realty Corp. in Barangay Balitoc at about 2 p.m. last Friday.

According to investigators, the two security men were seen having an argument just before the shooting.

Noble said Balbuena was taken to a government hospital in Manila.

The Batangas police are hunting Gaco, Noble said.

He could not say if Zobel was around when the shooting occurred.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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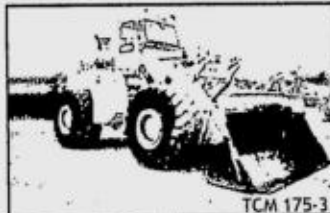
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Party in detention nothing new to Rep. Satur Ocampo

By Norman Bordadora

FRIENDS AND POLITICAL foes alike showed up for the 67th birthday celebration Friday of party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo at the Batasan Pambansa complex where Ocampo and four other militant party-list representatives have been held up since Feb. 28 under the protective custody of the House.

"It's no longer new for me to celebrate my birthday inside detention although I still don't consider this detention ... but my wish remains to be for freedom not only for [me and my party-list colleagues] but also for the Filipino people to be released from this crisis," Ocampo told reporters.

The so-called Batasan 5—Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza—face arrest on charges of rebellion if they leave the House premises.

They are likely to spend the Easter break there unless the Court of Appeals approves their petition to stop the Philippine National Police from arresting them pending the resolution of the justice department's preliminary investigation into their case.

Among those who joined Ocampo and his family—wife Bobbie Malay and son Antonio and his wife Zandra—were Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and former University of the Philippines president Francisco Nemenzo, another militant from whom Ocampo became estranged in the 1990s because of ideological differences, and the latter's wife Ana Maria.

Ocampo said his Bayan Muna and Nemenzo's Laban ng Masa again have a common cause—to force President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation.

Belmonte was a contemporary of Ocampo's in the pre-martial law media before Ocampo and other journalists like Antonio Ma. Zumel joined the communist underground.

"We were colleagues and have always been friends," Ocampo said of Belmonte.

Also at the party was Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, who has differed



BAYAN Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo (second from left) celebrates his 67th birthday with wife Bobbie Malay (left), son Antonio and daughter-in-law Zandra at the House.

JIM GUIAO/PUNZALAN

with Ocampo over the issue of compensating the rights abuse claimants but is now allied with him in the anti-Arroyo movement.

Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza was the only member of the United Opposition at the party which was held at the "minority garden" of the House of Representatives.

Other guests were former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and his daughter Marie, audio expert Jim Sarthou, family friend Fides Lim, Quezon City parks administrator Charito Planas and journalists from the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism.

Guests had to content themselves with orange juice, soda, a few bottles of wine and some tuba (coconut wine) from Southern Leyte as the celebrator supposedly does not approve of serving alcoholic beverages.

"People might use it to present the picture that we're just having too much of a good time inside the House," said Anthony Cruz, a member of the Bayan Muna staff at the House.

There was no lack of good food, however, as there was quite a spread of Kapampangan fare, as well as fresh fruits, a cake from Speaker Jose de Venecia and his wife Gina, and several roast suckling pigs from a number of congressmen.

"Many of the congressmen were already out of town. So they just sent their pork," said one of the guests.

More gatherings are being planned at the House during the Lenten break.

Maza's party will hold an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday while Bobbie Ocampo is said to have suggested holding a meteor shower party the week after.

Reyes seeks superbody to fight eco-terrorism

By Norman Bordadora

EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE continued environmental degradation of the country's natural resources, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes over the weekend asked all stakeholders to support his seven-point agenda that includes the formation of a superbody on environmental law enforcement.

Reyes, a former Armed Forces chief of staff and secretary of interior, proposed the creation of an Environmental Protection Commission comparable to the presidential anti-crime task groups to go after poachers, illegal loggers and other violators of the country's environment laws.

"We intend to propose to the President the creation of an Environment Protection Commission, similar to the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission to mobilize all resources of the government and the private sector to put a stop to the pollution and the destruction of our environment," Reyes said.

Reyes said that as a career member of the Armed Forces, a former secretary of national defense and later of the interior, he had always been involved in fighting terrorism and crime.

More harm and damage

"(The) degradation and destruction of the environment inflicts more harm and damage than any criminal or terrorist can hope to achieve," Reyes said.

He asked the private sector and big business to help the government ensure that laws against pollution and environmental degradation were implemented and produced results for the country.

"I call on the private sector to take a leading position in responding to the serious environmental challenges before us. Our real mission is to enable a partnership between the government and the private sector in a common quest to protect our environment and conserve," Reyes said.

Other points in Reyes' agenda include the need for responsible mining to generate revenues while sustaining mining resources, the completion of the country's geohazard map to forewarn communities of potential landslides and flashfloods, the revival of the Pasig River, arrest forest denudation, control air and water pollution, and the closure of all open and



REYES

controlled dumps nationwide.

"We will accelerate the rehabilitation of abandoned and idle mining projects that continue to pollute our environment. We will prioritize the Marcopper mines in Marinduque, the Basay mining project in Negros and the Bagacay mines in Samar," Reyes said.

The Arroyo administration sees the mining sector as one of the keys to the country's economic progress. The Supreme Court recently upheld the constitutionality of the Mining Act of 1995, removing one of the major obstacles to mining exploration by foreign companies in the Philippines.

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Opposition to ask courts to stop signature drive

CEBU CITY—OPPOSITION LEADERS and lawyers groups said yesterday they would petition regional trial courts all over the country to issue temporary restraining orders against the verification of signatures collected in the people's initiative to change the Constitution.

House Minority Floor leader Francis Escudero, speaking in Iloilo City, said the petitions would be filed starting next week against officials and employees of the Commission on Elections up to the regional election supervisor level.

Escudero said the opposition had also sought the help of chapters of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and people's organizations in filing the petitions.

"We only need one RTC to issue a TRO and an injunction and the signature drive will be blocked or delayed," Escudero told the INQUIRER.

He said a TRO would prevent

movers of the signature drive from getting the minimum required number of signatures.

Lawyer Neri Colmenares, convenor of the Committee for the Defense of Lawyers said the petition would ask the courts to enjoin the Comelec not to verify the collected signatures and to nullify those already verified.

Meanwhile, the Ilonggos' Movement Against Arroyo's Charter Change (I-March) and other groups have launched their own signature campaign to oppose the move to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative.

The groups said they would bring their campaign to parishes and barangays.

In Cebu, the Commission on Elections has required that all signature forms for the people's initiative campaign be duly notarized so it could go after the proponents in case they find fake signatures.

Provincial election supervisor Edwin Cadungog said he put on hold the verification of filled-up signature forms in at least four towns in Cebu because these were not notarized.

The Department of Interior and Local Government denied it was behind the signature drive conducted in villages in Batangas.

"It is the barangays that were responsible," said DILG provincial director Jose Baes.

A barangay official in Cuenca said it was the DILG that called a meeting of barangay captains where they were handed forms to be signed by the people.

A barangay official from Tanauan said: "Where else can we get the signature forms if not from DILG?" With reports from Jolene Bulambot, Nestor Burgos Jr. Jhun-nex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau, Marlon Alexander S. Luistro, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bernas: GMA insulting SC

From page A1
in a radio interview.

The CBCP pastoral letter decrying the signature drive moved Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez again to go on the warpath.

One of Ms Arroyo's chief defenders, Gonzalez hit "leftist elements" in the Church hierarchy and said the CBCP was insulting the Filipinos' intelligence when it warned that the people's initiative was "dangerously unclear and open to manipulation by groups with self-serving interests."

He said that although the Church could be very conservative on some issues, "in some instances they are very liberal in their criticisms" of the Arroyo administration.

"And the leftist elements in the Church are part of the liberal side of society ... There are left-leaning churchmen," he said, adding these people could no longer "hide their heads under the sand."

"I'm sorry, the Church will not like that statement, but I'm expressing a view that is basically factual," said Gonzalez.

Bernas spoke before some 200 people from the academe, non-government organizations, lawyers' groups and the Church.

Noli lauds CBCP

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO lauded the CBCP's vocal stand on the people's initiative issue and said that, considering its influence on the people, the Church could very well enlighten the people on the merits and demerits of the initiative as well as the proposed amendments.

"The CBCP is doing the right thing and I'm glad that the CBCP has taken an active role on this issue and it is just proper for the Church to help inform our people on this issue," De Castro, speaking in Filipino, told the INQUIRER.

He warned proponents of the initiative against subverting the true will of the people in collecting their signatures for the initiative. Cynthia D. Balana

Asked whether the high court would allow such an affront from the President, Bernas said the people would find out once the court ruled on the petition from the Abakada party-list group urging it to revisit its 1997 ruling.

He said that for a people's initiative to be constitutional, Congress must pass a law that prescribes the form, not the substance, of the exercise, and designate the date and venue and the manner of supervising such an initiative.

Amend, not revise

Bernas said the ongoing exercise was unconstitutional "because it calls for a change of structure of the government from presidential to parliamentary and that is revision."

Under the Constitution, a people's initiative is a tool for amending provisions of the Charter and not for revising it, he said.

Bernas also said the move to amend the Constitution now was not as urgent as Malacañang wanted the public to believe.

When asked if Ms Arroyo violated the Constitution by endorsing the people's initiative, Bernas said she might have her own interpretation of the law that should be strongly argued in a proper forum.

The CBCP pastoral letter said the people's initiative was "dangerously unclear and open to manipulation by groups with self-serving interests."

Palace assurance

Speaking on radio, Bunye assured that the government was committed to carrying out Charter reforms, "but only and always within the parameters that are sanctioned by the Constitution, the Supreme Court and the Commission on Elections."

He said the high court and the Comelec "were imbued with enough authority to address all attendant legal questions and issues regarding the people's initiative."

Some of Ms Arroyo's critics had questioned the integrity of the Comelec and expressed concern over the Supreme Court's independence considering that 11 of its 15 members were appointees of Ms Arroyo.

Church carried away?

On the CBCP's expressed concern about the public's lack of sufficient information, Bunye said Malacañang would not get directly involved in educating the public and that the best it could do was appeal to the public to keep an open mind on how changing the Constitution could lead to solutions to age-old problems.

"(The information drive) is the responsibility of the different organizations, members of the academe and those with advanced knowledge of the Constitution," said Bunye.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor also defended Ms Arroyo.

"There is nothing wrong and illegal in endorsing the people's initiative since this was part of the platform of government even before and during the elections. Any initiative or undertaking by the people, groups, NGOs and individuals in line with her programs and principles will always be supported by her," said Defensor.

In a telephone interview, Gonzalez said the CBCP could have been "carried away" by emotion as a result of some reported irregularities in the signature collection.

An insult

"Just because there are few reports of some falsified signatures, that is already accepted hook, line and sinker and they condemn the entire process. I think that is not correct," he said.

Gonzalez said the CBCP and the Church should step aside and see where the people's initiative would lead to, instead of making "speculative" statements.

"Every time our people do something, they are always being manipulated ... That's an insult to the intelligence and the maturity of our people. Why can we not give them a chance and find out for ourselves, then assail it later on," he said.

Corrections

IN THE APRIL 7 ISSUE, A TABLE COMPARING Thailand and the Philippines on Page A20 misstated that Thailand is "landlocked." Thailand has a coastline of 3,219 km and is bordered by the Gulf of Thailand to the south and the Andaman Sea to the west.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Magsaysay Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

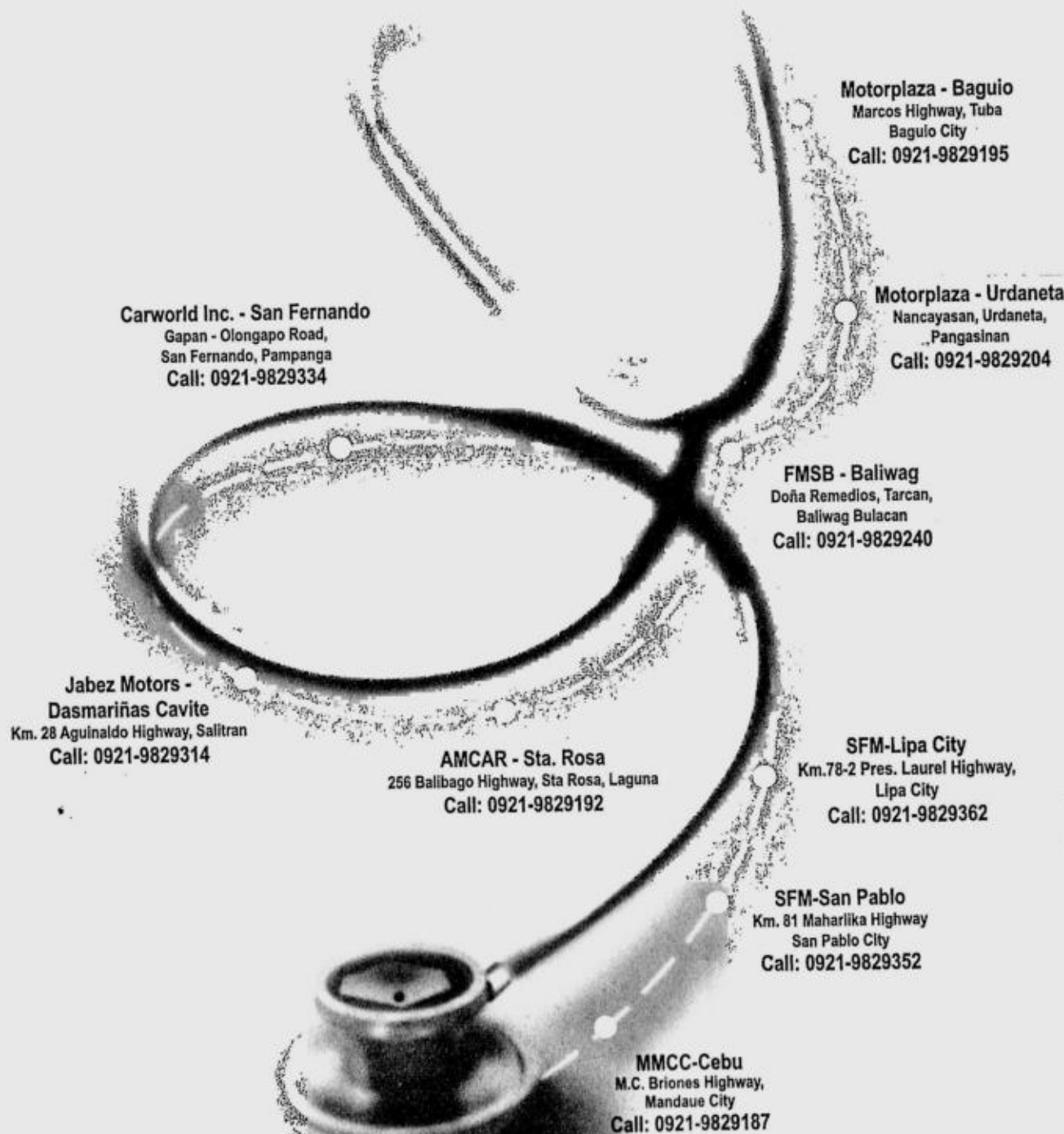
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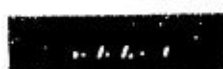
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By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ELEVEN MAGDALO GROUP SOLDIERS undergoing court-martial for the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny will be released soon under the same plea bargain terms granted to 184 other soldiers last year, a military

prosecutor said.

Col. Pedro Herrera-Davila of the Judge Advocate General's Office said the Jago was working out a plea bargain for the last batch of enlisted personnel being tried for the Oakwood mutiny.

"We're making arrangements in their

case, so they can be released under the same plea bargain conditions. Just watch out for that," Davila told reporters.

The 11 soldiers were apart from the 184 enlisted personnel who were de-

tained for nearly two years until they entered into a plea bargain with military prosecutors.

The 184 were demoted three ranks and suffered pay cuts for six months.

While negotiations for their release were going on, the 11 soldiers fired their long-time *pro bono* lawyer Roel Pulido, apologizing to him profusely.

The soldiers told Pulido they were "fully submitting" themselves to their superiors to resolve their case, which has been pending for two years and eight months.

No plea bargain is being discussed, however, for the 96 junior officers who led the soldiers in the mutiny.

"There's no plea bargain for the officers," Davila said.

Among the accused junior officers, 14 from the Army led by Captains Gerardo Gamba and Milo Maestrecampo had also dropped Pulido as their lawyer, citing "conflict of interest" after they apologized a second time to President Macapagal-Arroyo for the mutiny.

Gambala and Maestrecampo have since been disowned by the other officers in what they called the "Magdalo group."

The last hearing held on March 29 was postponed after prosecutors moved to consolidate the trial for all the three batches of accused.

The first group consists of the 29 alleged core leaders who were also charged with coup d'etat in a Makati court; the second group consists of 66 officers and 11 soldiers charged with mutiny, and the third group consists of eight officers charged with failure to suppress mutiny.

The defense panel objected to the consolidation after the junior officers put the matter to a vote among themselves.

The court-martial has not progressed beyond arraignment.

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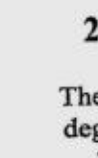
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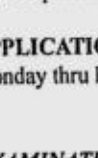
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Judas Gospel won't shake Christian faith

From page A1

infringement charges, claims that the Vatican has tried to cover up certain apocryphal texts.

The 31-page ancient manuscript written in the Coptic language, if authentic, will provide a text of what we know only from secondary sources, from the reports of the early Christian writers on a certain "Gospel of Judas." It will also shed light on how early Christians—the so-called Gnostics—understood Judas.

Egyptian language

Coptic was the language spoken in Egypt from A.D. 200 to 1000. The Christian Bible was translated into Coptic around A.D. 300, as Christianity spread in Egypt.

In the 2nd century A.D., religious movements began to challenge Christianity, especially in Egypt. These movements are called "Gnosticism" and its adherents are known as "Gnostics," although these terms were never used in that period.

Among the Church fathers, Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130-200) was the earliest to inform us of the challenges of the Gnostics. In his writings, he mentioned a sect calling themselves the Cainites (followers of Cain) and possessing a book they called the "Gospel of Judas."

Another writer, Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 310-403), described the Cainites as boasting that they were relatives of Cain, the Sodomites, Esau and Korah. Those who know their Bible well will understand that these characters are biblical villains. And so naturally, the Cainites admired the greatest villain of all, Judas Iscariot.

Why Judas betrayed Christ

According to the Cainites, as reported by Epiphanius, Judas received heavenly knowledge and betrayed Christ for two reasons:

One, Judas knew that Christ was wicked because he "wanted to distort what pertains to the Law." One must remember that Jesus's teachings at the time often came into conflict with the Jewish understanding of the Law of Moses.

Two, Judas knew that the power of the "archons" (these are naughty and lesser deities in Gnostic cosmology) would be drained if Christ were to be crucified.

So Judas "bent every effort to betray him (Christ), thereby accomplishing a good work for our salvation," Epiphanius wrote.

The Cainites also argued that Christians should "admire and praise" Judas, "because through him the salvation of the cross was prepared for us and the revelation of things above occasioned by it."

In short, in the eyes of the Cainites, Judas helped Jesus save humanity by betraying him. He actually fared better than the rest of the disciples who did not understand that Jesus must suffer and die.

Good vs evil

In a positive sense, the story of Judas will allow us to rethink the problem of good and evil in the world. If Judas's betrayal of Christ was part of God's plan, did God intend evil in the world?

Dear to the Gnostics is the idea that God created a disordered and chaotic world. We don't even have to be a Gnostic to realize that the world, at times, is flawed. That's why the Gnostics adored villains like Judas. They were the epitomes of a disordered world.

Another controversy that could come out of reading the "Gospel of Judas" is the question on God's mercy and forgiveness. If God were indeed merciful, did he forgive Judas?

Two chances to retract

Traditionally, many have thought that Judas is probably in hell, because of Jesus's severe indictment of Judas: "It would be better for that man if he had never been born," as he says in Mark 14:21. But these words do not

tell us of the fate of Judas.

There are two scenes from the Passion narrative which illustrate Jesus's compassionate attitude toward Judas. First, during the Last Supper, in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus announced to everyone that someone at the table was going to betray him. Although Jesus never identified the traitor, the Gospel writer wanted readers to understand that Jesus knew of Judas's evil plan. At that point, Judas could have retracted.

Another familiar scene is Judas's kiss on the Mount of Olives. Luke has this account: "He [Judas] approached Jesus in order to kiss him, but Jesus said to him, Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" Judas was about to kiss Jesus but Jesus warned him, at the very last moment, to refrain from the evil act. Another chance was offered for Judas to retract.

In a similar spirit, St. Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419), an influential Dominican preacher, said in a sermon in 1391: "Judas who betrayed and sold the Master after the crucifixion was overwhelmed by a genuine and saving sense of remorse and tried with all his might to draw close to Christ in order to apologize for his betrayal and sale. But since Jesus was accompanied by such a large crowd of people on the way to the mount of Calvary, it was impossible for Judas to come to him and so he said to himself: 'Since I cannot get to the feet of the master, I will approach him in my spirit at least and humbly ask him for forgiveness.' He actually did that and as he took the rope and hanged himself, his soul rushed to Christ on Calvary's mount, asked for forgiveness and received it fully from Christ. He went up to heaven with him and so his soul enjoys salvation along with all elect."

Nonetheless, an evil act is always an evil act—no matter what the result may be. The end does not justify the means and early Christian writers saw to it that Judas's action was not worth emulating.

Tips on reading Judas gospel

The issues that will be raised in reading the "Gospel of Judas" are not new. Nor will they "shake Christianity to its foundations" as some press releases have suggested. Nevertheless, it makes for a relevant and interesting Holy Week read. As in other ancient literary works, however, critical reading is always prescribed. Here are some tips:

- Be conscious that this is a modern translation of a language that is no longer spoken, and that the manuscript available is one among other copies that got lost or yet to be discovered. The original may no longer be found. Those who copied the text could have added or deleted some lines, consciously or unconsciously. A good translation depends on a reliable text and a thorough knowledge of the original and target languages, in this case, Coptic and English.

- The circumstances of any discovery of ancient artifacts or manuscripts are essential to their authenticity. Usually, an artifact that is found directly at the site by archeologists and not through some antique dealers gains immediately a certain degree of authenticity. The "Gospel of Judas" is in the possession of a private collector right now. National Geographic will have to explain the circumstances of its discovery and the private collector will have to allow independent experts to examine it.

- Background literature is needed to understand an ancient text. For the "Gospel of Judas," the best background is the Passion narrative in the four Gospels and the account of the death of Judas in Acts 1:16-20. It is wise to remember that the gospels and the rest of the books of the Bible are the Word of God. Other writings, like the "Gospel of Judas," can help us understand the world of the ancestors of our faith, but they are not the Word from whom we draw our joy and hope.

Networks racing to be first on Everest

From page A1

another part of the mountain during the same storm.

Rigorous training

To be sure, the Filipino climbers have undergone rigorous training, Nakpil said.

Romi "Garduch" Garduce, a member of the UPM who is being backed by GMA 7, has been training since the 1990s and has reached the summit of mountains considered as training climbs for Everest, like Aconcagua in the Argentine-Chilean border in South America, Elbrus in Russia and Cho Oyu in the Nepal-Tibet border.

The 17-member First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition Team, which is supported by ABS-CBN, recently hurdled a 10-day technical mountain training course at the Mt. Cook National Park in New Zealand.

The team, which has six UPM members, is led by 56-year-old Art Valdez, a former transportation undersecretary. It has also completed training expeditions in Nepal, Pakistan and Burma (Myanmar), according to its spokesperson Regie Pablo.

Nakpil expressed the belief that all the climbers would be careful not to take unnecessary risks.

But he observed that the lure of Everest and the hype and pressure being built up by the networks might be too strong.

'Derogatory' reports

Nakpil called on the two networks to present a balanced coverage.

He said certain reports were "derogatory" to Garduce: "I've seen reports that said he did not train enough or that he is a commercial climber who will have to pay his way to get to the summit."

"[But] everyone will have to pay the route fees and the sherpa [guides] for Everest. So I don't know what people are talking about when they say Garduch is a 'commercial climber.'"

Nakpil acknowledged that the media were entitled to report on the event.

"After all, it's all about a Filipino reaching the top of the highest mountain of the world," he said.

"But the media should [present] the other side so the reporting is balanced. Besides, we should all be happy if they all get to the top. Why couldn't we all just be happy about the fact that a Filipino will get to the top?" he said.

'For all of us'

Luchi Cruz-Valdez, head of ABS-CBN's Current Affairs department, denied that there was a "network race" with regard to the Filipino mountaineers.

"We don't want this to be a race to the top. Any victory is for all of us. Any Filipino who gets there is an event worth celebrating. So we are covering this as a news event. We wish them all good luck," she said.

Valdez also said that despite a letter from GMA 7 requesting her network to "respect [GMA 7's] exclusive rights to cover [Garduce]," ABS-CBN would try to get a comment from him if he reaches the top first.

"That is a news event and there is no exclusivity there. [GMA 7] can

have the interviews with him. We are looking at all attempts [to climb Everest] as news events," Valdez said.

Reason to celebrate

Michelle Seva, GMA 7 program director for news, said the network was not surprised that the public would get the impression it was a "network race."

"We fully support Romi's attempt and we hope and pray that he succeeds, but we also wish the other climbers well. If any one of them succeeds, it will be a reason for the country to celebrate," Seva said in a statement.

The network added that when it got wind of the other attempts, it encouraged Garduce to stick to his schedule, "and not do anything that would depart from what mountaineers would consider acceptable and safe."

Seva also stressed that GMA 7 was taking care not to "promote" the "competition" any further.

"As far as we know, [Garduce] is merely following his schedule, not deliberately participating in a race for Everest—which happened because the attempts to summit are now happening at the same time," she said, adding:

"We are covering this because this is a good story. But we constantly remind him that there is no pressure from us and that safety comes first."

"If he climbs to the summit, it will be because he is ready and weather conditions are conducive to it, not because we are pushing him."

'Quiet' climb

According to reports, the team led by Valdez had sent two "reconnaissance" climbers—Leo Oracion and Erwin "Pastor" Emata—to scale Everest in preparation for the attempt by the whole team in 2007.

Garduce, a systems analyst in his 30s, is now at Base Camp.

In his blog, he wrote that he would have wanted to climb Everest on his own, "quietly."

He added: "It's the ripe time and I have to climb it. It's like, it's not my choice anymore."

"Some people think this is a race. Well, this is far from being a race."

"How I wish somebody were here right now, ready to make an attempt with me. I'd prefer a small team than be a lone Pinoy trying to top the great peak. But as they say, 'Better to execute a good plan now than a perfect plan tomorrow.' I'll act now."

Seva said that while GMA 7 wanted Garduce to be first, "whoever gets there first will be a triumph of the Filipino spirit and the country."

Garduce wrote that he was unfazed by the competition.

"Generally, I think this is good in terms of increasing the overall chance of success in putting a Filipino flag on... the summit."

"I don't see this as a competition. Climbing the great mountain is a very personal matter. It's between the individual climber AND the mountain, nothing to do with the other aspiring climbers."

Out of the blue

"With a summit probability of 5-10 percent, it is never a question of who is first, but... who will be lucky to be on top. I hope that at least one

IN THE KNOW

Everest: Roof of the world

MOUNT EVEREST, THE WORLD'S highest mountain situated on the border of Tibet and Nepal, stood at 29,035 feet (8,850 meters) as of November 1999.

Everest is estimated to have been formed around 60 million years ago. With the two tectonic plates of Asia and India—which form the Himalayas—continuing to press against each other and causing the Himalayan peaks to grow slightly, the National Geographic estimates that Everest grows about four millimeters a year.

The mountain was once known as Peak 15. It was named after Sir George Everest, the British surveyor general of India, in 1865.

Attempts to climb Everest began in 1921, after Tibet opened its borders to outsiders.

The first try was made by a British team that included George Mallory, who disappeared while on his way to the summit.

Mallory's body was found in May 1999 at 27,000 feet.

Ten more expeditions over a period of 30 years failed to conquer Everest, with 13 people losing their lives.

The first successful climb to the "roof of the world" was made in May 1953 by Edmund Hillary and his sherpa guide, Tenzing Norgay.

Between 1921 and 2004, more than 2,200 people attempted to climb Everest, and more than 180 lost their lives in the quest.

The biggest number of climbers to reach the summit was recorded at 142 in 2000. The biggest number of casualties was recorded in 1996, when 15 climbers died on the mountain.

The dangers posed by Everest include avalanches, ferocious winds of up to 125 miles per hour, sudden storms, extremely low temperatures and oxygen deprivation. *Kate Pedrosa, PDI Research*

of us makes it on top."

In Mount Everest.net, Philippine mountaineer Francis Lim was quoted as saying it was "unclear" why Garduce and the Valdez-led team were not able to "consolidate their plans and schedules into one."

"Maybe Garduce was not included in the team, in the first place," Lim said. "Things suddenly turned interesting when, out of the blue, Garduce left Manila on March 4 for Nepal, ready to become the first Filipino to... hopefully summit Everest."

Wrote Garduce in his blog: "Let's support all climbers who are making an attempt. This is quite an effort, a very serious undertaking. [Let's] pray and hope that this whole thing will not lead to disaster."

"I hope that all climbers this year have their purity of intention, and not just to 'race,' or not just because they were 'sent on a mission.'"

"It would be sad if they lose a limb or something else while 'racing' or 'just completing a task,' and not following a personal path to self-discovery or self-enrichment."

Death March heroes can no longer walk to own tribute

From page A1

Kagitingan" relay marathon began at the Kilometer Zero Post in Mariveles, Bataan, on Thursday.

It passed through seven towns in Bataan and five in Pampanga to reach the abandoned train station in San Fernando on Friday.

It was in this Pampanga capital that Filipino and American guerrillas were herded into the train heading to Capas in Tarlac.

From there, they were forced to walk again to Camp O'Donnell, where, according to accounts, thousands more died of disease and torture.

Painful memories

With tear-filled eyes and despite trouble walking, 90-year-old Jorge Conde ambled to welcome the 150 runners to the final stop in San Fernando.

Conde, commander of the more than 700 World War II veterans in the city, grasped the peace torch and slowly led the contingent which was exhausted from two days of running.

At the Death March monument near the abandoned train station where they all converged, the more than 50 veterans greeted the arrival of another group composed of more than 30 bikers.

The bikers completed the San Fernando leg of the Galing ng Pilipino Movement's "Lakbyke," which kicked off in Capas on Thursday.

But not one of the veterans ventured near or inside the San Fernando train station.

Lamberto Miranda, 83, said it evoked painful memories: "[From here] we were packed like sardines into these bagon (train compartments) and hauled like animals to Capas. We walked again for many miles toward

Camp O'Donnell. Many of our compatriots died of malaria there."

Said Conde: "My head was supposed to be chopped off but I don't know what made the Japanese official change his mind."

Irony

Noting the irony, Regala said: "The run was for us, yet we could not run or walk. Old age has really weighed on us."

The organizers—the Runners Confederation of the Philippines (RunCPI) and the San Fernando Runners Unlimited Inc. (Safer Run)—understood.

"It's a pity. And this tells us they need more help," said athlete and sportswriter Ed Paez of Safer Run.

Paez started the marathon with a handful of friends in 1986, in compliance with the veterans' request for him to correct the wrong route taken by an athlete

from New Zealand.

What Paez thought was a one-time thing became a yearly affair.

"They asked that it be continued on a yearly basis to call attention to the plight of the largely neglected veterans. We runners are also doing it as a tribute to their gallantry in the war," Paez said.

Paez also said that in past years, few companies were willing to support the marathon.

RunCPI has adopted the event and will organize runs for the veterans' cause starting in June.

On Thursday, National Milo marathon titlists Rey Antoque, Jona Atienza and Liza Delfin carried the flags of the Philippines, the United States and Japan.

The sponsors' donations, in cash and kind, were given to the veterans.

Among this year's sponsors were Nestlé Philippines, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, AktivAde, Hotel Victoria de San Fernando, Pampanga's Best, Alice Bakery, Speed detergent, Philippine Red Cross, Besh of Besh Garments, Roel's Food Corp., Toyota and Excellent noodles.

Monthly pension

Speakers praised the veterans' contribution to the country during the Friday program.

But Conde expressed the hope that such rites would also go beyond remembering and thanking them.

"I am profuse with gratitude because [the organizers] remember our contributions to the making of democracy in our country."

These people are strangers to us, yet they value our sacrifices. What we want—and this one is

addressed to the national government—is that our monthly pension be raised and our benefits be given," he said.

Conde pointed out that the veterans' P5,000 monthly pension was not enough to meet the high cost of living. He said the burial assistance was limited to only P10,000.

Said Venancio Kabigting, 78: "That was not our war; that was the United States' war. And America denies us Filipino veterans recognition and benefits. We were a good fighting lot, better than them."

"We're dying by the day. This government should be treating us veterans better," said Conde.

Mayor Oscar Rodriguez said the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office should do more because time was running out on the old soldiers. *With a report from Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

2 'indie' bets make it to stock exchange board

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TWO INDEPENDENT STOCKBROKER CANDIDATES made it to the 15-man Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) board, which is typically dominated by influential Makati and Manila factions.

Unlike previous elections, this year's PSE elections held on the Ortigas trading floor Saturday was the "most peaceful" with board members unanimously re-electing incumbent PSE chair Jose Vitug and PSE president Francis Lim to their second terms.

The independent candidates that managed to garner significant votes were former PSE governor Joseph Roxas, and former PSE director Eddie Gobing.

Both were previously allied with veteran Manila broker Robert Cuyuto Jr. but opted to run as independent candidates in this year's elections.

Among the "big brokers" or those with more than P500 million in capitalization, Cuyuto topped this year's polls, garnering 14.9 million votes after he got the proxy votes of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and ATR Kim Eng Securities, sources close to Cuyuto said.

Makati broker Vivian Yuchengco ranked second with 11.3 million votes. William Ang of Astra Securities placed third with 10.8 million while Gobing of Lucky Securities ranked fourth with 10.3 million votes.

Makati broker Alejandro Yu of R.S. Lim & Co. also made it to the top five with 7.8 million votes. Yu was elected treasurer of the PSE board.

Under the "small broker category," Francisco Villaroman of Securities Specialists Inc.

ranked first with 9.2 million votes and Roxas came in second with 9.18 million shares.

A total of 15 million outstanding shares were voted, generating an almost 80 percent voter turnout, data from the PSE showed.

Of the 15-man PSE board, seven seats are occupied by brokers and eight seats by private sector nominees.

Aside from Vitug as independent director-chair, two more independent directors were re-elected, namely, former Kimberly-Clark chair Cornelio Peralta and former banker Jose Luis Javier.

Also re-elected were PLDT treasurer Anabelle Chua, who will represent the PLDT Beneficial Trust Fund's stake in the PSE, San Miguel Corp. Retirement Fund assistant vice president Amor Ilscupidez, Investment House Association of the Philippines director Robert Atendido and Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) chief operating officer Roy Joseph Rafols.

In 2004, the PSE sold its 40 percent stake to GSIS, SMC, PLDT and the Kim Eng Group. Recently, the Kim Eng Group sold its shares to US investment fund Equinox Partners.

Meanwhile, Lim said the PSE will oppose two pending bills in Congress banning the GSIS and the Social Security System from investing in the stock market.

The PSE also plans to invest roughly \$4 million to acquire a new trading system that will replace its 15-year-old trading system to minimize glitches, allow direct market trading and enable the PSE to launch new products and services.

The PSE will also study a plan to merge the Ayala and Ortigas trading floors under one roof, a proposal that was hotly contested in the past.

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PHILIPPINES - TAIWAN 1st Joint Labor Conference and Signing of MOU on SHPT



RP-TAIWAN PACT ON WORKERS

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas (second from left) and Minister Ying Yuan Lee of Taiwan's Council of Labor Affairs (second from right) hold up the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed for their respective governments recently by Philippine representative Antonio Basilio (right) and Taiwan representative Dr. Hsing Hsing Wu (left). The MOU would improve the working condition of Filipino workers in Taiwan as well as open up more jobs for them.

Call centers use workers, say militants

By Jerome Aning

THE MILITANT LABOR GROUP KILUSANG Mayo Uno said yesterday that call centers were nothing more than "air-conditioned hubs for exploiting workers" although the government hails them as a major source of employment and catalyst for economic activity.

KMU spokesperson Prestoline Suyat said that call centers and other process-outsourcing firms provided their employees poor working conditions and paid them less than living wages.

"At first glance, people think that call center jobs pay high. But the truth is call center workers are being exploited," Suyat said in a press statement.

He said that Philippine call center workers were paid starting salaries averaging P15,000 a month—below the estimated P19,950 cost of living—while a similar worker in the United States received a monthly salary equivalent to P40,000.

"With the same amount of work, our call center workers are receiving a lot less," he said. "This cost-saving measure means greater profit for BPO (business process outsourcing) employers but translates to greater exploitation for poor countries like the Philippines."

He claimed President Macapagal-Arroyo's push for the establishment of more call centers in the country was stunting economic growth.

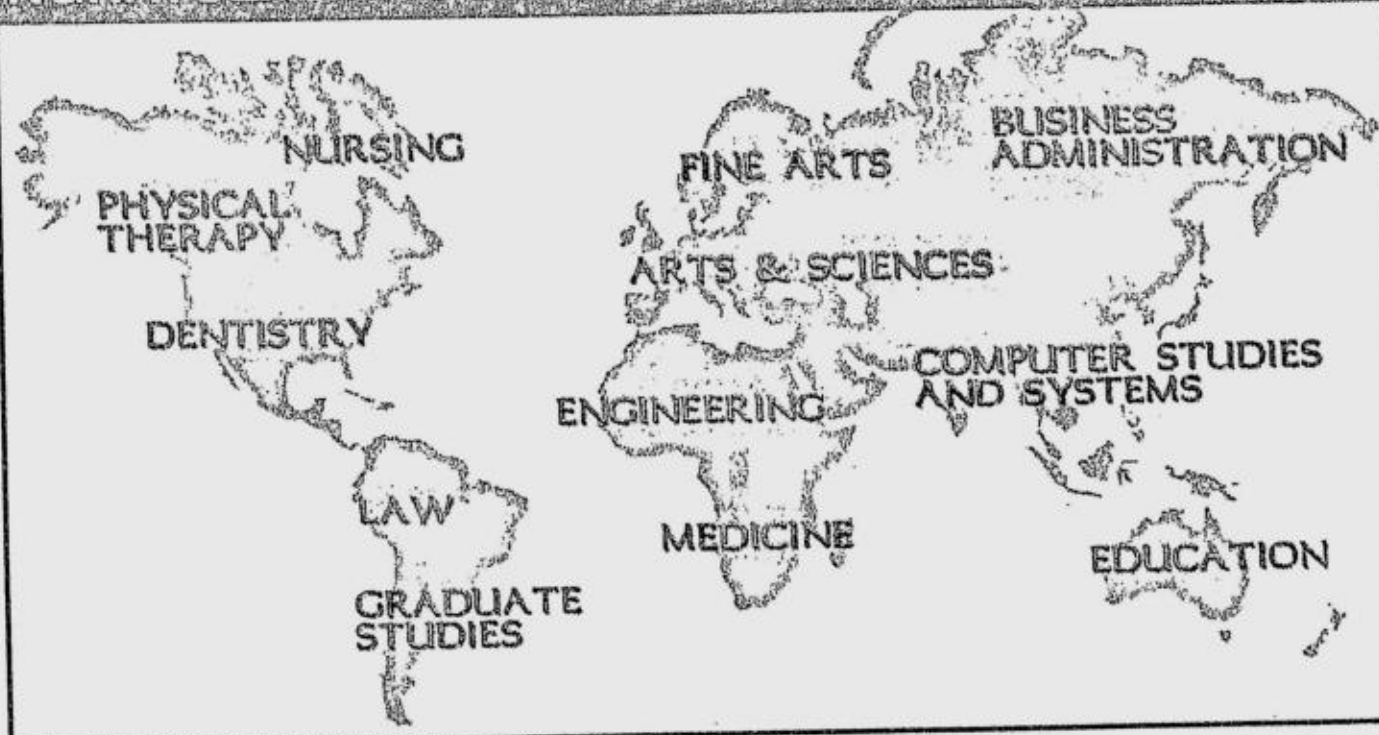
Last Tuesday, the Department of Labor and Employment launched a P500-million training program for 100,000 fresh graduates and jobless and unqualified call center applicants. It would initially benefit 20,000 call center applicants who need to improve their English proficiency and marketing skills.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said in an interview that her department was vigilant in monitoring working conditions in call centers and pointed out that many previously unemployed Filipinos were thankful that call centers had provided them decent jobs.

She said that with adequate training and skills improvement, a call center employee could quickly be promoted and earn as much as P25,000 monthly.

Suyat also criticized Ms Arroyo's call for government employees to avail themselves of early retirement and consider becoming call center operators to earn higher wages while the government streamlines the bureaucracy.

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Disturbing questions

THIS SURELY IS NOT THE PALM SUNDAY THE PRESIDENT and her disciples had in mind. Riding high on the Charter change express—a “train,” in President Macapagal-Arroyo’s own words, “that had left the station”—they must have all looked forward to a triumphant entry into the new Jerusalem promised by a new Constitution.

Instead, in the last several days they have found themselves suddenly clinging to their kingly pretensions: Instead of continuing approval or at least an ambiguous silence from the international community, they were welcomed with a stinging editorial in one of the world’s most prominent newspapers. Instead of hosannas from the world’s bankers and economists for the latest macro-economic numbers, they were greeted with a warning from the region’s main development bank. Instead of resigned acceptance of the so-called people’s initiative—planned in secret, conducted in haste, supported by the Department of Interior and Local Government, endorsed by Malacañang, and ready to be approved by compliant election commissioners—they were accosted by the sight of the country’s influential Roman Catholic bishops standing by the railroad tracks, wagging a collective finger.

In a short, politely phrased but unmistakably resolute pastoral statement, the bishops sounded the alarm over “the present signature campaign endorsed by the government” and asked the millions of faithful to consider taking appropriate action: “Vigilance, education, principled opposition may be necessary steps to take.”

Writing on behalf of his brother bishops, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines president, recognized the existence of a dynamic constituency for “constitutional reform” but also raised several pointed questions about the present, “alleged” people’s initiative.

In a word, the pastoral letter doubted whether the initiative was truly of, by and for the people. “This raises questions as to the authenticity of this signature campaign and the motives of those who promote it. Is this truly a ‘people’s initiative’ or the initiative of self-seeking political players wanting to entrench themselves in power? We might further ask the question of the source of funding for this entire operation.”

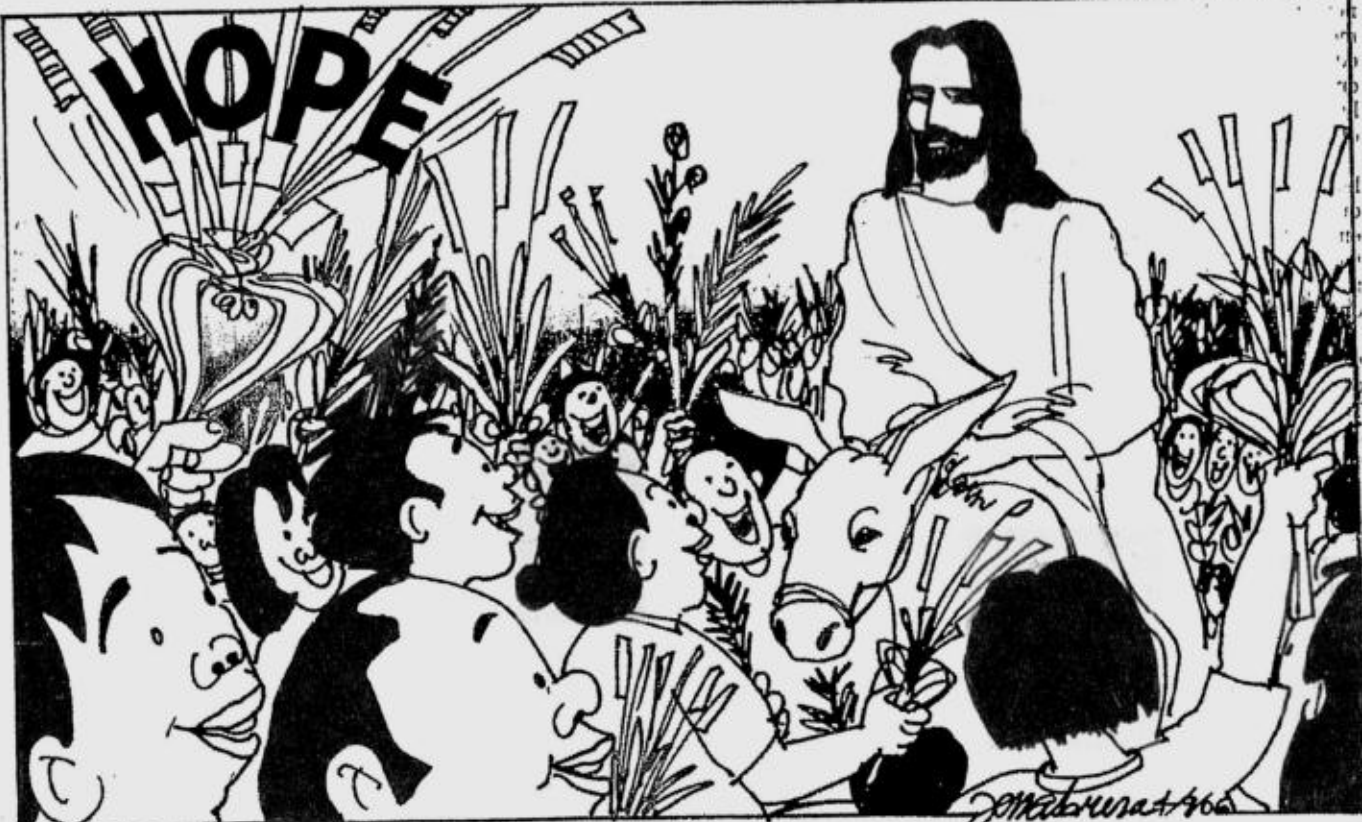
The bishops’ position on what for all intents and purposes may be called Secretary Ronaldo Puno’s people’s initiative is essentially process-oriented, and thus profoundly democratic. They appreciate the true value of the constitutional innovation; it allows for greater and more informed participation by the people. By the same token, they are loathe to see that innovation mocked by undue haste and political cynicism.

“The manner in which these signatures are supposedly collected, including door-to-door campaigns, (is) not conducive to the kind of informed participation that such fundamental changes demand.”

The bishops return again and again to the possibility that “self-serving interests” are the motive for the initiative. “The changes that are being proposed for signatures of citizens are dangerously unclear and open to manipulation by groups with self-serving interests.” And again: “We believe that ‘the reasons for constitutional change must be based on the common good rather than on self-serving interests or the interests of political dynasties.’” And yet again: “This lack of clarity on how the changes will truly benefit our nation raises disturbing questions about who will truly benefit from these changes. It seems that the changes as they are being proposed now will benefit mainly those who already hold positions of power and privilege in the current political system.”

In case the President and her disciples—a number of whom will go into spiritual retreat this week—miss the point, Lagdameo concludes the statement by drawing a sharp contrast between the self-serving, self-seeking behavior of the politicians behind the initiative and the selflessness of the Crucified One, (who, not coincidentally, entered Jerusalem on a more humble mode of transportation). “As Holy Week draws near, we pray that the self-sacrificing love of Christ, that alone brings life to the world, may fill the hearts of all Filipinos and bring about the new life we all desire for our nation.”

The Charter change express is no donkey.



An out-of-step Cha-cha

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz



THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE XVII of the 1987 Constitution prescribe the several methods by which it may be amended or revised.

“Section 1. Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed by: (1) the Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members; or (2) a constitutional convention.

“Sec. 2. Amendments to this Constitution may likewise be directly proposed by the people through initiative upon a petition of at least twelve per centum of the total number of registered voters, of which every legislative district must be represented by at least three per centum of the registered voters therein. No amendment under this section shall be authorized within five years following the ratification of this Constitution nor oftener than once every five years thereafter.

“The Congress shall provide for the implementation of the exercise of this right.”

“Sec. 4. Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution under Section 1 hereof shall be valid when ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite which shall be held not earlier than sixty days nor more than ninety days after the approval of such amendment or revision.

“Any amendment under Section 2 hereof shall be valid when ratified by a majority of the votes cast in a plebiscite which shall be held not earlier than sixty days nor later than ninety days after the certification by the Commission on Elections of the sufficiency of the petition.”

Note that Sec. 1 provides for amendments or revisions that may be proposed by Congress or a constitutional convention. Sec. 2, on the other hand, speaks only of amendments that may be proposed through the people’s initiative.

The same distinction is made in Sec. 4, which subjects to ratification by the people the amendments or revisions proposed by Congress or a constitutional convention and the amendments proposed through initiative.

The intention of the Constitutional Convention of 1986 is obvious from these provisions. It gave Congress or a constitutional convention the power to propose amendments or revisions of the Constitution but allowed the initiative to propose only amendments. The difference between the two kinds of changes was made clear at the outset in the title of Article XVII, which is now Amendments or Revisions whereas the title of the corresponding articles in the 1935 and the 1973 Constitutions was only the generic Amendments. Moreover, initiative was not allowed as a method of changing those past charters.

The distinction between amendments and revision is so well-known even to first-year law students that it is hard to believe that President Macapagal-Arroyo and her glorifiers are ignorant of it. A piecemeal change in the Constitution, like the increase of the retirement age of judges or the inclusion of educational qualifications for elective officials, is an amendment. By contrast, a revision involves a rewriting not only of a few isolated provisions but of practically the entire document like the replacement of the present presidential form of government

with the parliamentary system.

Amendments, as distinguished from a revision, do not need the careful and debatable study by a deliberative body like Congress or a constitutional convention which, by its composition and presumed superior competence, can better examine the more complicated plan to revise the Constitution.

A mere signature campaign will not ensure such study despite the political and financial hullabaloo of the dancers of the Cha-cha. Since the House of Representatives cannot by itself alone act as a constituent assembly or call a constitutional convention without the participation of the Senate, President Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia are scheming to establish the new government through the unauthorized method of the initiative to revise the Constitution.

Despite the clear language and meaning of the Constitution, the dancers of the Cha-cha are spending hundreds of thousands of pesos, from the public coffers to squander on their pretended ignorance of the supreme law they would revise by violating it. Their leaders are exhausting every effort to establish the parliamentary government where they hope to remain in power even if they have lost the people’s confidence to continue running the present government.

It remains to note that Congress has not provided for the implementation of the people’s initiative as required by the above-quoted Sec. 2. And, of course, whatever amendment or revision is proposed by Congress or a constitutional convention, or any amendment proposed by the people’s initiative, is subject to ratification by a majority of the votes cast at a plebiscite called for the purpose.

Dance the Cha-cha? Let’s sit this one out.

Of donkeys and monkeys

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD



donkeys you have in your life which the Lord could use. If you don’t let go of them, you might end up being burdened by them.

People who cannot let go of their donkeys end up like monkeys. There are people who spend their whole lifetime accumulating cars, houses, illicit relationships and what have you. Like monkeys, they cannot and will not let go of the things they get hold of. Watch and pray, especially this Holy Week that you are not becoming a monkey just because you cannot part with your donkeys.

We salute Prime Minister Thaksin—not only did he ask the Thai people to sacrifice, he himself sacrificed and resigned for the sake of national unity. This he did for the sake of the King. We do not only salute him. In fact, we congratulate him because, now, he is free, no longer attached to his donkey and to the donkeys around him. Do a Thaksin in your life, and you are noble, you are decent and you are free. Why do it? Because your Lord and your King asks of it.

So many monkeys in the Philippines! And boy, they talk so well, even with their mouths full. And they continue grabbing and hoarding even if their hands are full. I wish we had more of the monkey-eating Philippine eagles to eat and banish forever especially those monkeys in high places so that our land and our people would be truly free. You know what makes the situation worse? These monkeys that rule and govern us want to make monkeys out of us all!

What will you be this Semana Santa? Kris-

tianong bakasyonista (Vacationing Christian)? Kristianong artista (Acting Christian)? or, Kristiano talaga, kahit hindi Semana Santa (a year-round real Christian)?

Do something special this Holy Week in gratitude to God for his love and mercy. Go to confession, reach out to an enemy, spend quiet time in prayer, visit the sick, give alms, sign up for charity, let go of a donkey, resign, whatever. Do it all because it is what the Lord asks of you. In reality, it is your love and sacrifice that will really set you free. Be good to yourself—sacrifice and love. And make God smile in heaven above.

Someone texted me to say the sign of the cross slowly and end it with your hands across your chest when you say “Amen,” and then let God embrace you. Stay in this position and feel God’s loving embrace and love. What a beautiful feeling to be embraced by God, and to be reminded of our mission to spread his embrace and love! That’s what the Holy Week is all about. And, by the way, even monkeys can embrace, if only they let go of what they have in their hands.

Wishing you all a truly meaningful Holy Week. We are all dispensable in this world. We are all just passing by. Our lives and possessions are just lent to us. We carry literally nothing with us when we leave this world except the love we share in our life here on earth.

For your prayer request, just type FJREQ <message> then send to 2948 for Globe and Sun, and 3940 for Smart. To know more about Father Jerry’s text service, type FRJERRY, then send to 2948 for Globe and Sun, and 3940 for Smart.

A moment with the Lord:
Lord, help me to let go of the donkeys in my life, and not to become a monkey. Amen.

A nation of contradictions

WHEN MY LATE FATHER, MODESTO FAROLAN, was in the foreign service, I noticed that he had a small group of loyal and dedicated foreign service staff officers (FSSOs) who stayed with him through long postings in relatively difficult posts not aspired to by many in our foreign service. The more coveted assignments were those in the United States, Canada and Europe where one could enjoy the benefits of prosperous and economically advanced societies—and look to the possibility of permanent residency in the future.

Let me explain that the FSSOs are the equivalent of the senior non-commissioned officers in our armed forces. They are the workhorses of an embassy. If an ambassador has well-trained and hard-working FSSOs, he is relieved of the administrative chores that may sometimes be a burden on the chief of mission.

On the other hand, the foreign service officers (FSOs) of our diplomatic corps are the equivalent of the commissioned officers of the armed forces. The vice-consuls are the lieutenants; the ministers are the colonels, and the ambassadors are the generals. To qualify as an FSO, a candidate must pass one of the more difficult examinations given by the government; and at each step along the way to a possible chief of mission posting, our diplomats must face the Commission on Appointments for confirmation. This is, perhaps, one reason why ambitious embassy personnel abroad—those aspiring for promotion or reassignment to more favorable climes or for extension of their stay in the country—go out of their way to take good care of congressmen and senators, particularly members of foreign affairs committees or the Commission on Appointments. Pity the poor FSO who has displeased one of these visiting firemen.

One of the FSSOs who served under my father in South Vietnam and later Indonesia was Teodoro Valencia from Dingras, Ilocos Norte. Keep in mind that in the 1960s and early 1970s, these countries were hardship posts. South Vietnam was experi-

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan



encing a revolving-door change of government after the fall of President Ngo Dinh Diem with every senior general of the South Vietnamese armed forces having his turn at the helm. In the case of Indonesia, everything—from toilet paper to soap to toothpaste—had to be brought in from Singapore. A canal which ran through Jakarta served as the all-purpose sewer system with people doing their thing in full view of passersby.

Teodoro (Teddy) Valencia was part of Dad's loyal retinue. He served as embassy finance officer in Saigon and, later, Jakarta. Only the cold weather of Switzerland made it impossible for him to join my father in Bern. He was a quiet, knowledgeable and hardworking individual, and I knew that my father had full confidence in his work.

As with many of our FSSOs, Teddy hoped that one of his sons would someday follow in his footsteps. He had his eye on the third child in the family, Thaddeus, who was nicknamed "Ted." To his great disappointment, Ted opted to join the priesthood.

In 1979, Ted became the first Filipino priest to be ordained in Canada, joining the Congregation of Saint Basil (C.S.B.), an order founded by French diocesan priests in the 18th century. A week before his ordination, Ted called up his father in Jakarta, asking for his presence at the most important event of his life. After a silence that almost seemed like eternity, his father's voice came on the line with a curt reply—he was too busy with his work. But Ted understood.

For many years, there was not much communi-

cation between father and son. For one thing, Ted spent most of his time in missionary work in the American continent while his father was in different countries around the globe.

In 2001, just before he passed away, Teddy whispered to his son: "I am sorry I wasn't around for your ordination."

We, Filipinos, pride ourselves in being the only Catholic nation in this part of the world. We are a deeply religious people, aware of our duties and obligations as members of the Church. In particular, we have a great devotion to the Blessed Mother and the Child Jesus. We put much weight to the views of our spiritual leaders and priests in our communities. In fact, we accord their opinions with as much, if not greater, respect than the opinions of other professionals.

But ask any Filipino couple what their ambition for their sons is and, most of the time, the answer would be for them to become lawyers, doctors, engineers or businessmen. Rarely would the priesthood be mentioned. In fact, if you bring up the matter, you might create some uneasiness or reluctance to discuss the subject. It is as though the work of the Lord is for the sons of other people, not ours. My wife Penny, a devout, daily churchgoer, who spends more time in prayer than other people do, guided our sons to the legal and medical professions.

There have been all kinds of explanations for this situation—the reluctance of most parents to see their sons become priests. None have been satisfactory, at least for me, and I have always considered it one of the great contradictions of our society.

Of course, there are exceptions. When I was Customs commissioner, one of my district collectors was a wonderful man, Guillermo Orbos. Willy's ambition was to see all his sons become priests and, indeed, three of them entered the seminary. However, only one, Jerry Orbos, my neighbor to the left, would make it to the House of the Lord.

Boys will be boys?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



been wearing nothing but a bikini when she walked into Greenbelt, and still the security guard would not have the right to touch her breast.

"I WANT to be heard," adds Angela. "I want them to know how a woman would feel in my place."

The nuns in her old school, recalls Angela, taught them that "there comes a point in a person's life when you are faced with a choice: to seek justice or allow evil to have its way. What kind of a woman, what kind of a wife and mother would I be if I let this go away after a simple apology? Wouldn't I be guilty of letting this guard or other guards continue doing the same thing to other innocent shoppers?"

Angela and Edgar also question the security procedures being followed at Greenbelt. While the Emirates Security Agency said the guard was "only doing his job" and carrying out stringent security measures, Angela knows the guards don't inspect the bags of everyone who enters the mall; her mother and sister who preceded her into Greenbelt 3 were able to walk through without even showing the guard their bags. And even if the guard felt he needed to look through Angela's bag, couldn't he have merely called out and asked politely to inspect it? Why would he have to reach out to grab the bag slung on her shoulder and "accidentally" touch Angela's breast?

"How many breasts has this guard 'accidentally' touched in the line of duty?" Edgar wants to know. "How many more acts of lasciviousness, so damaging to our women's dignity, will go unpunished because many women will simply not go through the trouble of asking the

law to protect them, as we did, and just buy the excuse that these low-lives are just 'doing their duty'?"

And why, they ask, can other, less high-class malls and stores afford to hire male and female security guards to deal with customers in segregated lines, while Greenbelt can't?

CONTRARY to what I wrote yesterday, the guard is not out on bail because formal charges have yet to be filed against him. Although the fiscal the couple talked to did remark that the appropriate charges should be "unjust vexation" rather than "acts of lasciviousness" allegedly because the police found no evidence of "lewd designs" on the guard's part.

I have my own issues, though, with this part of the law, or its interpretation. What, after all, constitutes "lewd designs"? Did the guard have to leer at Angela from a distance, rub his hands in anticipation and salivate as he planned to "accidentally" touch a "maselang bahagi ng katawan" of his intended victim?

I happen to think that the crime falls under sexual harassment, since it was committed by the guard while on duty and in the line of work, as his own agency admits. But then our own anti-sexual harassment law has defined sexual harassment quite narrowly, limiting it to superior-subordinate relations in the workplace and in schools or training institutions. Then, too, in other countries, sexual harassment is defined as a "subjective" crime, where the motive of the accused (be it an accident or oversight) counts for nothing and only the accuser's feelings matter.

As of this writing, Angela and her husband have already formally written to Ayala Land, which manages Greenbelt among other malls, and I understand that the company will soon issue a letter of apology and, it is hoped, a formal explanation, to Angela.

But even this comes a little too late for Angela who can no longer be the "happy shopper" of old, and who cannot, understandably, pass through a security check without going through an unpleasant flashback. "Maybe I should be happy about this," quips Edgar.

The passion of the poor

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David



leased only after my lawyers and a couple of senators interceded on their behalf.

This little parable has lit my way wherever I speak on the issues confronting our society. It has taught me one important lesson: No matter how often I get arrested for the things that I say, write, or do, I still belong to the privileged class. I will always be able to call upon my community's spirit of solidarity. The police or the military may trample on my rights, but chances are the media will be there to bear witness. I may be jailed but I will never starve. I can talk about the primacy of political freedoms and civil rights because I have never known what it is to be hungry or poor.

The poor have nothing but their needs and their laughter, and perhaps, their faith. From where they stand, all politics in our country today only signifies continuing betrayal of their fundamental interests. Charter change and snap election seem trivial in relation to their urgent problems.

This is not a new story. It is as old as Christ's passion. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he came upon a people desperately in search of a leader. The Jewish nation could not dislodge the Roman yoke, mainly because the various opposition groups could not get their act together. Jesus—the teacher, the story-teller, the healer—had so impressed the people in the course of his ministry that various anti-Roman groups maneuvered to enlist him as their symbol. They viewed his martyrdom as the political spark that could galvanize Jewish unity and ultimately free Israel.

Jesus himself, however, had not spoken against

Rome. He spoke rather of a larger vision—the vision of God's kingdom, where justice and peace reigned. His preferred language was that of compassion with the poor, the oppressed, and the excluded. Here was a man who "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45) It was from this standpoint that he censured the hypocrisy of the different groups that jostled against one another to represent the future of Israel.

Upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus headed straight for the temple where he saw the dishonest money-changers and merchants of sacrifices plying their trade. They were enjoying the brisk business brought by the feast of the Passover. He became angry. He overturned their tables and told them: "Is it not written? My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations. But you have made it a den of robbers." (Mark 11:17) He detested the empty piety of people who claim to have faith but do not practice it in their lives.

Here was a true subversive. His framework was not the political framework of the day. His vision went beyond the political ambitions of those who claimed to speak for Israel. His method was different; he was unarmed. He made himself available to all kinds of people. To those who despaired he offered a message: "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other." (Mark 9:50) Salt, the antidote to decay, is a timely metaphor for cultures that have lost their ethical saltness.

There is no way we can solve the recurrent crisis of our political life unless we start to correct the criminal disparities in wealth and power that exist in our society. What this requires is more than just a change of our leaders or of our form of government. We need to review our basic values, and ultimately rebuild our whole social order on a new ethical foundation. Until then, the passion of the poor will continue to haunt us.

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Bohemian rhapsody

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK BEING FILIPINO IS A CHALLENGE, a gauntlet thrown on a dirt floor. The country is in an outrageous state, with a political system constantly being tested and people leaving in droves every year. I'm guessing most Filipino twentysomethings get out of college feeling pretty much the same way I'm feeling now: thrilled and afraid, expectant and suspicious, all at the same time.

We went through

17 years of schooling and years of cursing at alarm clocks, chewing through pencils, and blowing lunch money on photocopies of readings. The last leg before graduation was

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista



more of a mindless race—eyes on the target; minds trained on the goal. I figured it was fine, because one day soon, the big payoff would come floating down from the sky on a pillow of clouds.

For the graduates of 2006, the day is here—and I haven't the least idea what to do with mine. We're told we're supposed to be the hope of the future, the voice of the times, the children of the new revolution. So like most people fresh out of college, I end up 20 years old, burning with the fever of idealism and crazy enough to believe I'm going to save the world. Ask me how, and I won't be able to give an answer. How does a person save the world?

I saw the movie adaptation of the Broadway hit "Rent" last Saturday. It's the story of eight young people struggling to make their mark through art in New York's seedy Alphabet City. It's a heart-stopping musical about friendship, romance, sacrifice and breaking away from comfortable truths to live for a principle.

There's Benny, the friend-turned-landlord who sells out to be the "laptop of a wealthy daughter of the revolution." Then there's Mark the amateur filmmaker, Mimi the exotic dancer searching for someone to light her candle, Maureen the wild performer and her lover (the lawyer Joanne). There's Tom Collins, the down-and-out college professor who gets beaten up and mugged, and the big-hearted Angel who saves him, then offers Tom her love for no more than "a thousand sweet kisses."

Mostly I fell hard for Roger, the longhaired former rock star, a dreamer split between principles and desire, bitterness and hope, struggling to write that one great song while freezing in his third-floor garret—I'm guessing it's because of my personal affection for bad boys and rebels in leather jack-

ets. The movie is a tribute to the bohemian lifestyle—to days of inspiration, playing hooky, making something out of nothing; the need to express, to communicate, to go against the grain; to going insane, to going mad; to love, intention, no pension, to more than one dimension, starving for attention; hating convention, hating pretensions—and the struggle between Bohemia and Reality. The story lays out the choice between the glorious sufferings for art and selling out for a paycheck in the daily grind of corporate America. In the end, Bohemia wins, along with true love, glory and 565,600 minutes of living for no day but today.

The fairy tale land of Bohemia is beautifully romantic—who wouldn't want to live for beauty, truth, freedom and love? But in the Philippines of 2006, I wonder whether it's working for the system or against the system that will bring that payoff in the end.

My friend Nicolo and I had a long conversation a month ago while we were stuck in Makati traffic. We were talking about idealism and growing up, and what we wanted to do once we had the chance. Nicolo said he was going to be a doctor, because unlike any other profession in the world, a doctor is bound to do something good for humanity. Every other profession is forced to make value judgments: a lawyer defends a man whether guilty or innocent, a businessman is bound to step on someone else's toes along the way, but medicine makes no compromises: a doctor simply saves lives.

I have another friend who intends to teach in farms in Bacolod, because he figures his place is among the grassroots. My "orgmate" Jewellord wants to bring down the evil empires of the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, while his old teammate Ben is plugging away in law school to join the ranks of the WTO's lawyers. Val, my panda-like friend who hops around wearing a tiny baseball cap in between his economics classes, claims that the one thing that will help the Philippines is to "Privatize everything!" while my other friends rally in Mendiola against corporatization because that's their idea of fighting the good fight. My movie-buddy-slash-confessor-friend Neeks straddles the tightrope between the corporate and the humanitarian. Her days are split between teaching sociology in the University of the Philippines and working for a multinational in an Ortigas office.

Me, I'm clueless. The thought of living on just-add-water noodles while writing the "Great Filipino Novel That Will Save Mankind" sounds romantic today, but hey, one can't live on bread alone—there are movie tickets and electric bills and printer ink and Chickenjoy and jeepney fares to deal with. Not to mention the fact that I'm afraid of being a struggling artist with no art to show for it at the end of the day.

We all have our causes, our principles and ideals to fight for. Bohemia may be dead for some, and the picture of the struggling revolutionary in an attic is probably a holdover from the 1960s. For all I know, we'll even be laughing in a few years over the idealism that grips us today. But hey, I figure I'm young enough to be stupid, and stupid enough to dare.

THEY SAID

'School trek'

"Some of these kids wake up as early as 5 o'clock in the morning just to reach their school by 8 a.m. And they are dismissed early in the afternoon, by 3 or 4, so they can be home by 7 in the evening."

—Public school teacher Salvacion delos Santos, on the hardships that the children of the indigenous Tagakaulo tribe in the hinterlands of Davao del Sur have to go through in going to school.

Dangerous comparisons

"I don't love drawing comparisons between myself and characters because it's probably a dangerous exercise for me to undertake."

—Hollywood actress Natalie Portman when asked if she had anything common with her rebellious character in "V for Vendetta"

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TALK of the TOWN



Gonzalez's new gem: GMA has balls, Thaksin doesn't

From page A1

to Justice Raul Gonzalez, who yesterday stressed that Ms Arroyo—who is dogged by charges of irregularities like Thaksin—would hang tough and would not resign her post.

Sterner stuff

"Maybe Thaksin Shinawatra is not made of sterner stuff. *Konting tulak lang, takot na siya* (A small thing scares him)," said Gonzalez over his radio program "Hustisiya Para Sa Lahat (Justice for All)" on dwiz.

Gonzalez, who fired broadsides at former President Corason C. Aquino, her daughter Kris, and actress Susan Roces, said that one problem Thaksin had was that as prime minister, he was "not elected by the people directly."

"President Arroyo was elected by the people. She won—as far as we are concerned—in an election that was fair and square," he said.

Thus, Ms Arroyo "feels she has a full mandate from the people until 2010," Gonzalez said.

"The situation in Thailand is different from here. They have a parliamentary system of govern-

ment while we have a presidential form of government. There are only two ways to remove our President—impeachment or voluntary resignation," he said.

Gonzalez said that Ms Arroyo's critics should follow the proper procedure for removing a President.

"There is a process to follow and they cannot wait for that process to ripen," he said, alluding to the impeachment complaint which tanked last year because the opposition failed to muster the necessary votes for it to move forward.

Let's not be copycats

Gonzalez was reacting to calls by members of the Senate and critics for Ms Arroyo to do a Thaksin and resign.

The justice secretary said that the President no longer paid attention to such calls, knowing that her enemies "have nothing better to say than that."

He added that Filipinos should stop being copycats.

"We cannot be copycats (gaya-gaya). Just because it happened in Thailand, it does not mean that we have to do it here," he said.

From page A1

yesterday, Marissa Bacosa-Yamamoto said she had sought a meeting with Pacquiao, who is set to fly to Los Angeles after the Holy Week to train at the Wild Card Gym.

"(Pacquiao) is a big shot in Manila. We couldn't even see him there anymore like we used to. I could probably talk to him here," she said, fuming.

Pacquiao is to spend three weeks of training in May at the gym in Hollywood for his World Boxing Council super featherweight fight with Mexico's Oscar Larios at the Araneta Coliseum on July 2.

Closed-door training

After LA, he will train four more weeks in Baguio City. His training will be held behind closed doors.

Marissa flew two weeks ago to Los Angeles from Japan, where she lives with her second husband, a retired Japanese ship captain. In Los Angeles, she is staying with her eldest daughter.

Marissa said her three other

daughters and a son wanted her to keep quiet but she just couldn't.

"I feel guilty. I have failed her once. I feel I have to take up the cudgels for her this time because she still has a good future ahead of her," she said.

And if Pacquiao refuses to see her, the 49-year-old Marissa said she was ready to picket his training center with a group of placard-bearing Filipinos to demand that Pacquiao respect the rights of women.

Threat of lawsuit in US

While waiting for Pacquiao in Los Angeles, Marissa said she would be conferring with an American prosecutor about a Nevada law prohibiting a boxer from fighting if he was facing a suit involving minors.

Before this interview, Marissa spoke with her daughter's lawyer, Victor Rodriguez, about granting an interview with a group of American newsmen inquiring about Pacquiao's alleged son.

The American reporters, she said, wanted to find out if it was true that her daughter,

24-year-old Joanna Bacosa, was only after Pacquiao's money.

Not mine, says Pacquiao

She was indignant, of course, she said.

Joanna's counsel told Marissa to go ahead with the interview with American reporters in Los Angeles.

"I am mad. You print that," Marissa told the INQUIRER. "Why can't Manny be man enough to face my daughter in court? Can a man just impregnate a woman and be allowed to get away with it?"

Pacquiao has denied that he is the father of Joanna's 2-year-old son, but said that he was willing to support him if a DNA test proved he was the father.

Pacquiao thrice snubbed a one-on-one meeting with Joanna at the office of Assistant City Prosecutor Ma. Gracia Casacang of Quezon City, where he has been charged with violation of Republic Act No 9262, which protects women from violence.

Pacman's promise

"I can support my daughter and my grandson, but Manny

Pacquiao ought to recognize his son and honor his obligation to him," said Marissa, a commerce graduate from the Philippine School of Business Administration.

She said she met Pacquiao at least 10 times during his two-year relationship with her daughter.

"He promised me that he would never forsake my daughter," she recalled Pacquiao telling her several times over dinner.

"How could he deny that the boy isn't his son? Eh, kamukhang kamukha niya! (He looks like him)."

Mother's cross

That her daughter fell in love with a married man who now refuses to recognize her and their son has become, to Marissa, something of a family tragedy.

"This is a mother's cross [to bear]. I failed her as a mother," she said.

She said she was physically fit, but she won't dignify the challenge of Pacquiao's own mother to a fistfight.

"I find that so cheap," she said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Sunday, April 9, 2006
Passion Sunday
(Palm Sunday)

1st Reading:

I will not be disgraced

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord Yahweh has taught me so I speak as his disciple and I know how to sustain the weary. Morning after morning he wakes me up to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord Yahweh has opened my ear. I have not rebelled, nor have I withdrawn. I offered my back to those who strike me, my cheeks to those who pulled my beard; neither did I shield my face from blows, spittle and disgrace. I have not despaired, for the Lord Yahweh comes to my help. So, like a flint I set my face, knowing that I will not be disgraced.

2nd Reading:

Emptying of Jesus

Philippians 2:6-11

Though being divine in nature, he did not claim in fact equality with God, but emptied himself, taking on the nature of a servant, made in human likeness, and in his appearance found as a man. He humbled himself by being obedient to death, death on the cross. That is why God exalted him and gave him the Name which outshines all names, so that at the Name of Jesus all knees should bend in heaven, on earth, and among the dead, and all tongues proclaim that Christ Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel:

Passion and Death

Mark 14:1-15:47

(The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.) It was now two days before the feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were looking craftily for a way to arrest Jesus and put him to death; for they said, "Not during the Festival, or there might be trouble among the people." Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper. As he was reclining at dinner, a woman entered carrying a precious jar of expensive perfume made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfumed oil on Jesus' head. Then some of them became angry and said, "What a useless waste of perfume. It could have been sold for more than three hundred silver coins and the money given to the poor." And they criticized her.

But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why are you troubling her? What she has just done for me is a very charitable work. At any time you can help the poor, for you always have them with you, but you will not have me forever. This woman has done what was hers to do, she has anointed my body beforehand for my burial. Truly, I say to you, wherever the Good News is proclaimed, and this will be throughout the world, what she has done will be told in praise of her."

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went off to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus to them. On hearing him they were excited and promised to give him money. So Judas started planning the best way to hand him over to them.

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the day when the Passover Lamb was killed, the disciples asked him, "Where would you have us go to prepare the Passover meal for you?"

So Jesus sent two of his disciples with these instructions, "Go into the city and there a man will come to you carrying a jar of water. Follow him to the house he enters and say to the owner, 'The Master says: Where is the room where I may eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' Then he will show you a large room upstairs, already arranged and furnished. There you will prepare for us." The disciples went off. When they reached the city, they found everything just as Jesus had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. While they were at table eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who shares my meal." They were deeply distressed at hearing this and asked him, one after the other, "You don't mean me, do you?" And Jesus answered, "It is one of you Twelve, one who dips his bread in the dish with me. The Son of Man is going as the Scriptures say he will. But alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; better for him if he had never been born."

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. And he said, "Take this, it is my body." Then he took a cup and after he had given thanks, passed it to them and they all drank from it. And he said, "This is my blood, the blood of the Covenant, which is to be poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not taste the fruit of the vine again until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God."

After singing psalms of praise, they went out to the Hill of Olives. And Jesus said to them, "All of you will be confused and fall away; for the Scripture says: I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. But after I am raised up, I will go to Galilee ahead of you."

Then Peter said to him, "Even though all the others fall away, I will not." And Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, today, this very night before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." But Peter insisted, "Though I have to die with you, I will never deny you." And all of them said the same.

They came to a place which was called Gethsemane and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

But he took Peter, James and John along with him, and becoming filled with fear and distress, he said to them, "My soul is full of sorrow, even to death. Remain here and stay awake."

Then he went a little further on and fell to the ground, praying that if possible this hour might pass him by. Jesus said, "Abba (Daddy), all things are possible for you; take this cup away from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want."

Then he came and found them asleep and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Couldn't you stay awake for one hour? Keep watch and pray, all of you, so that you may not slip into temptation. The spirit in-

deed is eager but human nature is weak. And going away he prayed saying the same words. When he came back to the disciples, he found them asleep again; they could not keep their eyes open, and they did not know what to say to him.

When he came back the third time, he said, "You can sleep on now and take your rest! It is all over, the time has come; the Son of Man is now given into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us go. Look: the one betraying me is right here."

While Jesus was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, who had been sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law and the elders. The traitor had arranged a signal for them, "The one I kiss, he is the man. Arrest him and take him away under guard."

So, when he came, he went directly to Jesus calling, "Master! Master!" and kissed him. Then they seized Jesus and arrested him. One of the bystanders drew his sword and struck out at the High Priest's servant, cutting off his ear.

Jesus turned to them saying, "So you have set out against a robber! Did you need swords and clubs to arrest me? Day after day I was among you teaching in the Temple and you did not arrest me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled." Then they all deserted him and fled.

A young man covered by nothing but a linen cloth followed Jesus. As they took hold of him, he left the cloth in their hands and fled away naked.

They led Jesus to the High Priest and all the chief priests assembled with the elders and the teachers of the Law. Peter had followed him at a distance and went right into the courtyard of the High Priest, where he sat with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

Now the chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some evidence against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they were unable to find any. Even though many came up to speak falsely against him, their evidence did not agree. At last some stood up and gave this false witness: "We heard him say: 'I will destroy this Temple made by hands and in three days I will build another not made by human hands.'" But even so their evidence did not agree.

The High Priest then stood up in the midst of them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer at all? What of this evidence against you?" But Jesus was silent and made no reply.

The High Priest put a second question to him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" Then Jesus answered, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Most Powerful and coming with the clouds of heaven around him." The High Priest tore his clothes to show his horror and said, "What more evidence do we need? You have just heard his blasphemous words. What is your decision?" And they all condemned Jesus saying, "He must die."

Some of them began to spit on Jesus and, blindfolding him, they struck him saying, "Play the prophet!" And the guards set upon him with blows.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the High Priest's servant-girls came by. Noticing Peter beside the fire, she looked straight at him and said, "You also were with Jesus, the Nazarene." But he denied it, "I don't know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out through the gateway.

The servant-girl saw him there and told the bystanders, "This man is one of them." But Peter denied it again. After a little while those standing by said to Peter, "Of course you are one of them; you are a Galilean, aren't you?" And Peter began to justify himself with curses and oaths, "I don't know the man you are talking about."

Just then a cock crowed a second time and Peter remembered what Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

Early in the morning, the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the Law (that is, the whole Council or Sanhedrin) had their plan ready. They put Jesus in chains, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "You say so." As the chief priests accused Jesus of many things, Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer at all? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus gave no further answers, so that Pilate wondered.

At every Passover festival, Pilate used to free any prisoner the people asked for. Now there was a man called Barabbas, jailed with the rioters who had committed murder in the uprising. When the crowd went up to ask Pilate the usual favor, he said to them, "Do you want me to set free the King of the Jews?" For he realized that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him out of envy. But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask instead for the release of Barabbas. Pilate replied, "And what shall I do with the man you call King of the Jews?" The crowd shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked, "What evil has he done?" But they shouted the louder, "Crucify him!"

As Pilate wanted to please the people, he freed Barabbas and after the flogging of Jesus had him handed over to be crucified.

The soldiers took him inside the courtyard known as the praetorium and called the rest of their companions. They clothed him in a purple cloak and twisting a crown of thorns, they forced it onto his head. Then they began saluting him, "Long life to the King of the Jews!" With a stick they gave him blows on the head and spat on him; then they knelt down pretending to worship him.

When they had finished mocking him, they pulled off the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him.

The soldiers led him out of the city to crucify him. On the way they met Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, and forced him to carry the cross of Jesus.

When they had led him to the place called Golgotha, which means the Skull, they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he would not take it. Then they nailed him to the cross and divided his clothes among themselves, casting lots to decide what each should take.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The statement of his offense was displayed above his head and it read, "The King of the Jews." They also crucified two robbers with him, one

on his right and one on his left.

People passing by laughed at him, shook their head and jeered, "Aha! So you are able to tear down the Temple and build it up again in three days. Now save yourself and come down from the cross!"

In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law mocked him saying to one another, "The man who saved others cannot save himself. Let's see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from his cross and then we will believe in him." Even the men who were crucified with Jesus insulted him.

When noon came, darkness fell over the whole land and lasted until three o'clock; and at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lamma sabachthani?" which means "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" As soon as they heard these words, some of the bystanders said, "Listen! He is calling for Elijah." And one of them went quickly to fill a sponge with bitter wine and, putting it on a reed, gave him to drink saying, "Now let's see whether Elijah comes to take him down."

But Jesus uttered a loud cry and gave up his spirit. And immediately the curtain that enclosed the Temple sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom.

The captain who was standing in front of him saw how Jesus died and heard the cry he gave; and he said, "Truly, this man was the Son of God."

There were also some women watching from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and Joses and Salome, who had followed Jesus when he was in Galilee, and saw to his needs. There were also others who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

It was now evening and as it was Preparation Day, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Joseph was a respected member of the Council who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God.

Pilate was surprised that Jesus should have died so soon; so he summoned the captain and inquired if Jesus was already dead. After hearing the captain, he let Joseph have the body.

Joseph took it down and wrapped it in the linen sheet he had bought. He laid the body in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock and rolled a stone across the entrance to the tomb. Now Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joses took note of where the body had been laid.

Commentary

It is time to face death with Jesus. Isaiah tells us how we are to endure: speak to the weary and rouse them, open our ears to the Word, to suffer and not turn back and to absorb the hate and pain that is inflicted on us. God is our help and we will not be disgraced though we may be killed. We are to set our faces like flint and hang onto God for a dearer life. We are bound with Christ in God, in suffering and death and in glory. We must all die, being human. And we must die as we have lived, faithful to God with Jesus the Word, not grasping at life but taking on the attitude of Christ who is the LORD of life. We worship by living and dying together with Jesus for the truth. The passion of Jesus is our Passion.

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INQUIRER *Mindanao*

Rehab center embraces special kids

THEY dance and strut the hip-hop beat except they don't hear the music. They are the hearing-impaired students of Hangop Kabataan, a community-based rehabilitation center for special children.

MICHAEL SARCAUGA



By Michael Sarcauga
Pagadian City

THEY DANCED THE "tinikling" and laughed when they made mistakes. They seemed perfectly normal children having fun with themselves, except that they do not hear the dance music.

They are hearing-impaired students of Hangop Kabataan (Embrace Children), a community-based rehabilitation center for special children in Pagadian City.

On April 1, children with physical and mental disabilities were given recognition in various fields they excelled in toward being independent, said teacher Virginia Pestafias.

"We gave all of them recognition, such as Best in Drawing and Best in Mathematics—as some are really good even if they are handicapped—Best in Spelling, Best in Dancing and many more," she said.

This school year, Hangop Kabataan has a total enrollment of 108 students—children who have autism and cerebral palsy, Downs Syndrome, learning difficulties, hearing impairment, dwarfism and hydrocephalus, amputees and those with club feet, orthopedic or polio victims, and the blind.

Special numbers

On Recognition Day, their families and relatives came to watch the young performers. Children with Downs Syndrome and hearing impairment presented folk dance numbers; an amputee did a Hawaiian dance; and children with learning difficulties joined in the community singing.

The closing ceremony was held at a beach resort.

The Hangop Kabataan employs a community-based approach toward rehabilitation. All members of the family and their relatives are involved in the efforts, said Pestafias.

Aided by five full-time teachers and three volunteers, parents and relatives are taught how to communicate with the children using sign language.

"Good communication relationship with special children is very important. Hence, everyone in

the child's environment must learn how to communicate with them," said teacher Jocelyn Eghan.

Special volunteers

The volunteers are also special children who have attained independence and have shown to be helpful in educating the other special children, Eghan said.

"Our volunteers, whom we call teacher's aides, have ... techniques that we do not possess," she said.

At the center, the teachers have been trained to spot the potential skills of every student.

Such is the case of Michael Robert "Miro" Verdida, a 7-year-old autistic child who has drawn the attention of his teacher because, according to Eghan, he is able to operate computers with ease.

"Miro has shown interest in computers and he is one of those special kids that are fast learners. We are looking into his ability to manipulate the computer as his potential skill and, maybe, we can educate him through the use of computers and develop his skills," said Eghan.

Miro is fond of high-tech gadgets. When this writer tried to talk to him, he seemed not interested in the person, but in the digital camera in front of him. He grabbed it and examined intently the details of the camera. His mother laughed and told this writer that Miro was very interested in small gadgets, like mobile phones and cameras.

Special skills

"He showed special skills that we are trying to understand, but at present we know he likes computers and with fewer instructions, he can click at the menus and follow the programs," Pestafias said.

Hangop Kabataan is offering free sign language classes every summer. "So more people can understand and use sign language, and so that more people can communicate with our children," Pestafias said.

Teachers use both oral and sign communications, even to those without any hearing impairment.

Several college students have already signed up for the sign languages classes, according to Pestafias. Some education and social work students, who underwent their internship training at the center, have convinced other students to enroll.

Encounters with wildlife at the park

By Jennifer L. Ramos
Contributor

"BUILD IT AND THEY will come."

The unforgettable line from the movie "Field of Dreams" hit me when I saw the place. Visitors come from the nearby provinces, and even from other areas of Mindanao, such as Davao and Sarangani. The place has also received guests from as far as Luzon.

Since its opening in 2002, the Misamis Occidental Aquamarine Park (MOAP) has catered to around 5 million guests. What keeps them coming?

A project funded by the provincial government, the MOAP is located in Libertad Bajo, Sinacaban, Misamis Occidental. It is just a 15-minute van ride from nearby Ozamiz City.

The park, just a few meters from the highway, is very accessible, even to commuters. Vans and buses from Dapitan, Dipolog and Oroquieta cities drop guests at the park.

Upon paying an entrance fee of P10, the visitor immediately sees the 3-hectare fish-

pond that provides fresh tilapia to the park's restaurant. To the right is the wildlife zoo amid a mangrove forest. To get there, one must cross a quaint bridge, made entirely of bamboo, over a brackish creek which also serves as the oyster farm. Young oysters clump on rows of ropes hanging from horizontal bamboo poles.

Hatchery

A meandering board walk in the cool mangrove forest leads to cages of birds, crocodiles, monitor lizards, monkeys, pythons and civet cats. The majority of the animals were donated by residents from nearby cities and provinces.

Most of the birds are endemic to nearby Mount Malindang.

The zoo has a modest collection of animals, but it still attracts busloads of students from the Lanao provinces and Bukidnon.

Across the forest is the hatchery. It houses aquariums of African mudfish, tilapia, freshwater giant shrimps, and other colorful fish. Fingerlings are sold to private enterprises but are given free to accredited cooperatives and people's organizations. Some are used to seed the province's marine and freshwater areas.

Karl Immanuel Aonan, the park manager, said the facility aims to produce a million fingerlings a day for distribution.

To the right of the hatchery are day cottages, suite rooms, family rooms and dormitories nestled among mangrove trees. The suites have furnishings made from indigenous materials but with modern designs.

Dolphin Island

The restaurant is out in the sea, hidden by mangrove trees. A long walk on a bamboo bridge from the hatchery leads to it. Adjacent is the Ramiro Hall, which can seat around 100 persons.

A few steps from the restaurant is a shaded waiting area and wharf for boats bringing guests to the Dolphin Island, so-called because of several pens housing rescued dolphins. The place, which can be reached in 10 minutes, has been designated and accredited by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources as Marine Rescue Refuge.

Bamboo walks surround the dolphin pens. Adults and children alike delight in catching a glimpse of the dolphins, especially during feeding time at 4 p.m.

Janice Salvador, the park's assistant operations manager, said the pens sheltered four dolphins, which were turned over by fishermen who accidentally caught them in their nets.

Salvador said veterinarians from the Provincial Veterinary Office regularly visited the island to give medical attention to the dolphins.

Dolphin Island is just a sandbar visible during low tide. All the structures and facilities spread over the shallow sea are supported by concrete pillars. Its grandstand can seat around 500 people.

In front is a big pen enclosed by nets. Almost the size of an Olympic swimming pool, guests can swim with a marine turtle, snorkel or feed the fish.

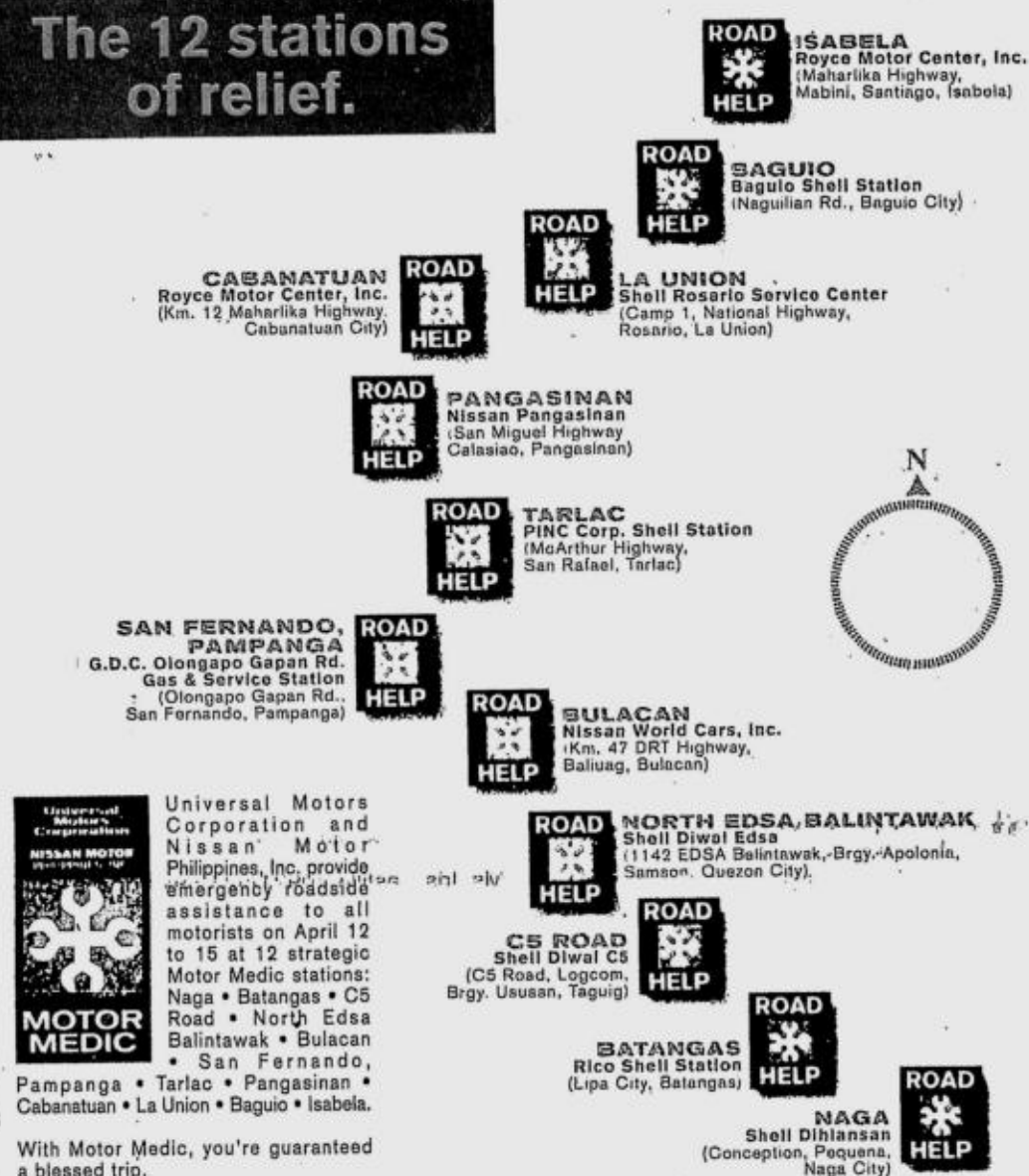
The island's other attractions are several snorkeling and dive sites, the most popular of which is the Takup Point where divers interact with sea turtles and black tip sharks. One can also go kayaking or visit the giant clam farm.

The MOAP is not just another resort. Gov. Loreto Leo Ocampos conceptualized the project, which aimed to increase aquaculture production, protect and rehabilitate the environment, and promote eco-tourism.

The MOAP is one of this year's Galing Pook awardees for most outstanding program under the category of innovations in local governance.

(The author is the former provincial legal officer of Sarangani. Taking a respite from her law practice, she is now into "therapeutic" writing.)

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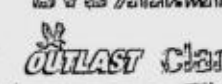
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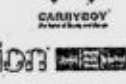
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Gov't lawyer stands trial for recruitment

BAGUIO CITY—A LA UNION PROSECUTOR has volunteered to stand trial for a P36-million fund misuse scandal involving a job recruitment agency and middlemen based in South Korea.

Prosecutor Catalino Pepi was detained in Pasig City on three illegal recruitment charges due to the failure of Transcend Employment Services Inc. to deploy job applicants to factories in South Korea.

These charges were dropped last week but Pepi remained detained for 13 more illegal recruitment and embezzlement suits filed in this city.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) had accredited Transcend to participate in a bilateral employment agreement that allows the agency to send workers to South Korea.

Pepi took a leave of absence from his post in San Fernando City because he acted as Transcend's legal counsel. He was later appointed as company vice president and marketing director.

Pepi was working for the Commission on Human Rights before he was transferred to the Department of Justice.

According to documents from POEA, Transcend failed to complete the deployment of its first 100 clients in 2003 because its South Ko-

rean brokers reneged on an obligation to process the Filipinos' working visas.

Danilo Tan, Transcend president, was preparing to send 300 workers when his firm hired Kang Dong Seog and Han Jung Yul to process the Seoul documentation.

Hernani Pepi, the prosecutor's son who acts as the family spokesperson, said his father was left holding the bag when Tan went into hiding in 2003, along with half of the fees paid by the workers.

"But my father is a devout Christian. He told our family he was going to face the clients and he would try to find ways to recover [on behalf of these job applicants] their hard-earned money," the son told the INQUIRER.

Pepi's solution was to pursue a legal battle in Seoul, with the assistance of the DOJ and the International Police (Interpol), because he wanted to recover millions of pesos that Transcend had wired to Kang and Han before Tan disappeared.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez helped Pepi facilitate the Korean suit.

Gonzalez informed his South Korean counterpart, Justice Minister Kim Seung-kew, about the Transcend fiasco in a March 14, 2005 letter. **Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**



BRIDGE TO PARADISE

A wooden footbridge connects the shoreline of the village of Libertad Bajo in Sinacaban, Misamis Occidental to cottages that form part of an aquamarine park in the village. Visitors are treated to sights of dolphins and other encounters with nature in the park. (See story on Page A14)

KARL AOANANI/CONTRIBUTOR

Gambling pays off; PCSO earns P1B in Visayas, Mindanao

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE PHILIPPINE Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in Visayas-Mindanao reported that its collection for the first quarter of this year has reached the one billion-peso mark, exceeding its sales target sales by 15.90 percent.

William Medici, PCSO's Vis-Min manager, said the agency collected P1.049 billion from January to March this year, or about P100 million more than its target of P905 million.

Medici said the January to March revenue is also 22.43 percent higher than the P856.9 million sales generated in the

same period last year.

"With this good sales, I am hopeful to hit and even exceed our target sales of P3.6 billion by the end of the year," Medici said.

Medici said PCSO's revenue during the first quarter was boosted by the increase in the number of lotto terminals in Visayas and Mindanao, from 723 at the end of last year to at least 901 in March.

Medici said new lotto terminals are being put up in areas like Samar, Surigao City, Zamboanga del Sur and Davao del Norte.

He said the rising patronage for lotto was due to the multimillion-peso jackpot prizes last February, especially in the Superlotto draw where the jackpot



prize reached more than P100 million.

"The huge prizes had attracted the people to bet," Medici

said in Cebuano.

Medici also said that of all the games they have introduced, the Suertres Lotto, the three-digit numbers game, has the biggest sales share at 29 percent, followed by mega lotto 6/45 (28 percent), super lotto 6/49 (19 percent), lotto 6/42 (17 percent) and the four-digit numbers game (7 percent).

Medici said he expected that more terminals would be put up in Visayas and Mindanao with the introduction last December of a new \$14-million lotto system.

Medici said this new lotto system is powered by Extrema, a computer hardware that features a faster betting process and a smaller square ticket.

Mom of teen mistaken for thief seeks help

TABACO CITY—THE

mother of a 17-year-old high school graduating student is seeking help from the Commission on Human Rights after her son, who was mistaken for a fugitive by lawmen here, suffered three gunshot wounds and is now in critical condition at the Bicol Regional Training and Teaching Hospital in Legazpi City.

Albert Mackenzie should have been among the graduates on Friday at the Doña Josefa Edralin Marcos Foundation High School in Malilipot, Albay, said his mother Herminia Bondoy.

However, eight armed men wearing fatigues and bonnets raided their house at Sitio Mati, Barangay Canaway in Malilipot at 5:30 a.m., April 4, Bondoy said.

The raiding team was looking for a certain Romeo Solano, a suspected motorcycle thief, the night before the raid, she added.

Lovely Bondoy, 24, the victim's half-sister who witnessed the shooting, said Albert was roused from sleep by the gunmen who barged into their house.

The victim tried to run for fear he would be shot by the strangers, according to Lovely.

The lawmen's subject, Solano, lived in Barangay Bongabong, Supt. Renato

Batalier, chief of the Tabaco City police office, said it was a legitimate operation but it turned out to be a case of "mistaken identity." **Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

ROUNDUP

Healthy kids program

COTABATO CITY—The government seeks to provide health services to at least 100,000 children in Maguindanao during a five-day program. Dr. Tahir Sulaik, provincial health officer, said the program will start on April 17. "We will be providing free vitamin A capsules, conduct immunization against measles, dental checkup, and lesson on protecting children from health hazards," Sulaik said. Maguindanao is one of the country's poorest provinces, where people have virtually no access to medical services.

Charlie B. Seifase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Teacher shot dead

PIKIT, Cotabato—A public school teacher was shot dead by an unidentified suspect here on Monday evening. Nurhamin Sumbaga, 38, was going home with another teacher when the lone suspect flagged the motorcycle they were riding. As soon as the motorcycle stopped, the suspect, armed with a .45 cal. pistol, fired at the victim. Police said personal grudge could be the motive for Sumbaga's killing.

Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Village guard slain

TABACO CITY—A village watchman of Barangay Tabiguan was killed by unidentified suspects believed to be New People's Army rebels on March 31. City police chief Supt. Renato Batalier said at least five armed men forcibly took Blandino Panen, 49, from his house at Purok 3. Witnesses said the suspects shot Panen when he tried to flee. Panen suffered nine bullet wounds.

Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 more arson attempts

LEGAZPI CITY—An unidentified person left a burning candle covered with a jacket on top of an amplifier during Mass at the St. Raphael Parish Church on April 4. There were no further damages as the church organist saw the burning candle before the fire could spread. On Friday, the audio-visual room of the Divine Word College of Legazpi was set on fire. Also set on fire this week was the Bicol University Little Theater, with damages reaching up to P6 million. Last month, fires hit four hospitals here and a building of a state college in Camarines Sur.

Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Dirty water downs 63

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 63 residents, mostly children, were victims of water contamination at Barangay Ilawod, Polangui, Albay. Provincial health officer Dr. Luis Mendoza said the victims suffered stomach pains and diarrhea but were declared safe after medication. The outbreak was caused by contaminated water running through old asbestos pipes. The provincial government immediately requested the local water district to replace the pipes with new ones.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Airport gets P150M

LEGAZPI CITY—The national government has released P150 million to start the development of the Southern Luzon International Airport in Barangay Alobo, Daraga, Albay. Rep. Joey Salceda said Transportation Secretary Leonardo Mendoza received the initial amount for the 104-hectare site acquisition and road right-of-way payments. Salceda expressed confidence that the P3.6-billion project would be realized in three years with full support from governors and mayors in the Bicol region.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

P2.9M for employees

DARAGA, Albay—The Daraga Municipal Council has allocated some P2.9 million for 237 regular employees' cash benefits and additional allowances, which are retroactive this January. Mayor Gerry Jaucian said this amount would augment the employees' income and help them meet high costs of living.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

F. Chiong; 55

CEBU CITY—Mayor Ferdinand Chiong of Naga town in Cebu died at 1:20 p.m. on April 3 at the Cebu Doctor's University Hospital due to complications resulting from cancer of the esophagus. He was 55. Chiong, a last term mayor who ran under the administration party, was diagnosed with the ailment only this year.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau



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Across the NATION



ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Phones in \$20M village phone project don't have dial tones

KATIPUNAN, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE—TELEPHONE booths are a common site in this town and in other areas of the Zamboanga peninsula but nobody uses them to make calls for one reason—the lines are dead.

The phone booths were installed under the Telepono sa Barangay (TSB) project of the national government sometime in 2000. The

project was spearheaded by the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC). The project, which was actual-

ly part of the national Municipal Telephone Project (MTP) under Republic Act No. 6849, was funded by local and foreign funds.

Nationwide, the project received over \$20 million in funds.

Based on the website of the DOTC, about 3,470 telephone lines would be established in 347 barangays in selected provinces with local, national and interna-

tional telephone services.

"Every barangay shall be provided with three (3) payphones using phone cards for outgoing calls and one (1) plain ordinary telephone system (POTS) for incoming calls shall be installed," the DOTC website said.

But several years after the telephone booths were installed, no one can make calls because the phones had no dial tones, according to Mayor Patchito Eguia.

Eguia, who refers to the phone booths as "orange elephants" because of their color, said the DOTC "left (the phone booths) inoperative six years ago."

"What's the use of having three telephone booths per barangay, for display? It's not working, somebody from up there should explain why," Eguia said.

He said that of the 30 barangays here, 18 villages were recipients of the TSB project.

In Dumungag town, Mayor Edgardo Jamero said the installation of phone booths was "done without any consultation from the local leaders."

"They just put all those gadgets there with the promise that the people can already call their friends, relatives using a card. But it's idle," he said.

Jamero said "the government is just wasting money."

Francisco Perez, assistant sec-

retary for telecommunications, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that about 1,000 phone lines under the TSB project are not working in the peninsula.

He said the project was actually discontinued because of mismanagement.

"Because of mismanagement, Congress decided to discontinue the project," he said.

Perez said the TSB project was only turned over to them by the DOTC sometime in 2004, two years after it was implemented in Western Mindanao.

"I really don't have any idea where the mismanagement occurred and who were involved. I also do not have an idea how much was actually spent (for the project)," Perez said.

Perez said his agency was pursuing the TSB project using the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology.

He said they were still studying the possibility of tapping the abandoned phone lines.

"But it really depends on the configuration of each geographical area. We still have to fix everything first," he said.

Until such time, residents of the peninsula would have to contend themselves with the non-working phones according to Eguia. **Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

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Workers spruce up Baguio for Holy Week

BAGUIO CITY—EMPLOYEES OF the Baguio City Hall have extended their working hours until midnight to help clean every street in the downtown area in time for the influx of tourists during the Holy Week.

Government clerks and policemen scrubbed sections of Harrison Road's sidewalk, near Burnham Park, a favorite tourist destination, on Thursday night. They were also scheduled to scrub Gov. Pack Road, where bus terminals are located, on Saturday night.

Among the city's Holy Week visitors this year is the First Family. President Macapagal-Arroyo is scheduled to hold a Cabinet meeting at the presidential Mansion on Holy Monday (April 10).

Benedicto Alhambra, city tourism officer, said almost every sector in Baguio is cooperating to show tourists "a very clean summer capital" because tourist arrivals last year dropped due to reports on the bacterial disease meningococemia.

The country's summer capital is normally visited by an average of 150,000 tourists during Holy Week, according to Alhambra.

But Baguio lost half of this number when hotel bookings were withdrawn starting December

2004, the city's peak tourist period, when news about the outbreak of meningococemia broke out.

The city government had been sensitive about the meningococemia experience that it took steps to get a newspaper (not the INQUIRER) to pull out an advertisement of a meningococemia vaccine distributor last week, Alhambra said.

The distributor's advertisement included color photographs of the Ifugao terraces and the lion head along Kennon Road. But the ad offended Mayor Brailio Yaranon and Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan for the use of photographs to refer to last year's tragedy.

"Obviously, people have forgotten that incident," Alhambra said.

Tourists have started flocking to Baguio since March, the end of the school semester, "and we are expecting to win back the 150,000 tourists we normally hosted since 1995," he told the INQUIRER.

Hotels have reported a 70 percent increase in bookings.

"Baguio is always a summer destination, and we enjoyed the best tourism years during the term of [former President Fidel Ramos]," Alhambra said. **Vincent Cabreja, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

Batangas cops admit they got wrong man

BATANGAS CITY—MILITANT organizations in Batangas yesterday belied accusations that the man police arrested on Thursday was a high-ranking official of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the Southern Tagalog region.

In an unprecedented move, the Batangas police admitted that they got the wrong person, saying the one they arrested was actually a brother of the supposed leader of the New People's Army (NPA) in Batangas.

Senior Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro, Batangas police director, said members of the Intelligence Task Unit, headed by Supt. Renato Angara, erred when they arrested Dario Almonte inside his house in Sitio Puyo, Barangay Sta Clara, Batangas City at about 6 a.m., Thursday.

Montenegro said they mistook the man for Dionisio Almonte, said to be the brother of Dario.

Dionisio, he said, was the real target of the operation.

"Sorry, we arrested the wrong

person last Thursday morning. He was a brother (of our target)," Montenegro said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

"The Philippine Air Force (based in Fernando Air Base in Lipa City) could have released him by now. We turned him over to the Air Force for tactical interrogation," he added.

Police earlier claimed that the one they arrested was Dionisio, purportedly a team leader of the Rehiyong Yunit Gerilya and another guerrilla unit of the Eduardo Dagli Command, the NPA unit operating in Batangas.

Police said Dionisio was also known as Ka Leon, Ka Enol, Ka Oman and Ka Jojo in the underground movement.

Montenegro said Almonte has a warrant for his arrest issued by the Municipal Trial Court of Mauban, Quezon for kidnapping with serious illegal detention, frustrated murder and malicious mischief. **Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

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METRO

'High Places' in Antipolo City attract Holy Week crowd



ST. MICHAEL'S Retreat House: A place where souls find hope and comfort. ROMY HOMILADA

By Prosy B. Montesines
Contributor

MANY LOOK FORWARD TO THE HOLY WEEK as an opportune time to put a brake on high-speed living and temporarily escape from a stressful workaday world.

If the streets of Metro Manila look deserted during this time, it is probably because a lot of world-weary urbanites hie off either to their favorite R&R (rest and recreation) venues, or to a different plane called the "high places."

The biblical term "high places," according to priests and Bible expositors, refers to an actual experience of weighing one's bearing through spiritual rebirth or renewal. This experience helps believers gain a clearer and deeper understanding of many things that had been puzzling and mysterious to them before, and reinforce their connection with God along the way.

Many Holy Week observers search for these "high places" by going on spiritual retreats. Several religious sanctuaries and retreat sites are located in hilly Antipolo City, a few kilometers east of Metro Manila.

Traditionally, on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, penitent pilgrims and devotees walk all the way from Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City to the 400-year-old Antipolo Cathedral where the much-revered brown icon of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage is enshrined.

Prayer, recollection facility

Not far from the cathedral, on Siete Media Street at San Jose Extension, is St. Michael's Retreat House, the oldest Catholic prayer and recollection facility in Antipolo. Built in 1968 originally as a *cursillo* house, it was renovated and transformed into a retreat center in 1985 to address the growing need among Catholics for spiritual activities.

The 2.5-hectare compound is an enclave shielded from the summer heat by towering mahogany, rubber, bamboo, palm and mango trees embraced by vines and surrounded by lush foliage.

Holy Week programs usually include family retreats, group and individual prayer sessions and recollections, Singles for Christ fellowships, and the so-called spiritual discovery programs such as marriage encounters and youth encounters.

The rates for participants are "socialized," according to Veron Pineda, retreat house administrator. Donations from generous guests are used to cover or subsidize the rates of accommodations for the poor.

The whole facility can house 300 persons. Retreat participants can request the services of priests for counseling, confession, guidance on Bible interactions, and other religious activities. "We also care for our guests' physical nourishment by serving nutritious meals of fine dining quality," Pineda added.

Retreat center

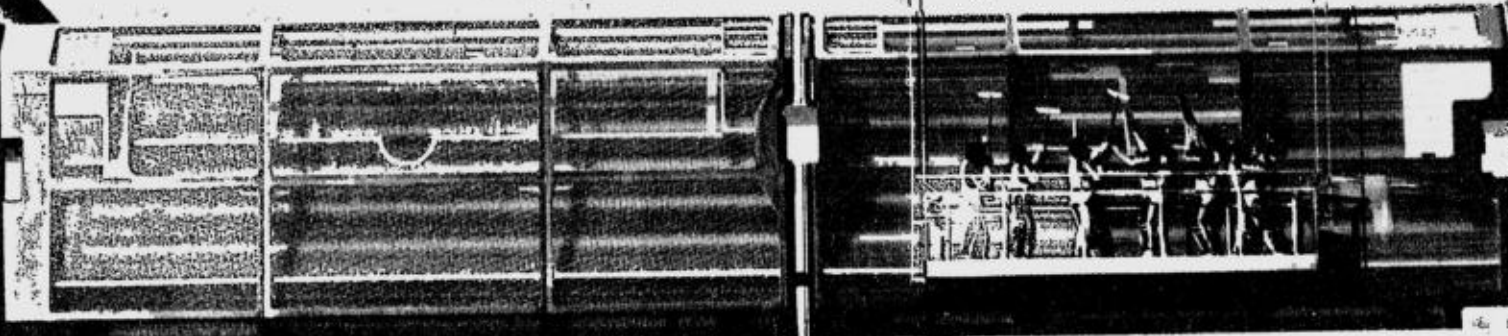
Located in an adjacent property is the Our Lady of Antipolo Retreat House, a smaller facility that was once a seminary.

The two dormitory buildings can hold 180 persons. A resident priest, Father Nante Tolentino, serves as spiritual adviser to retreat participants.

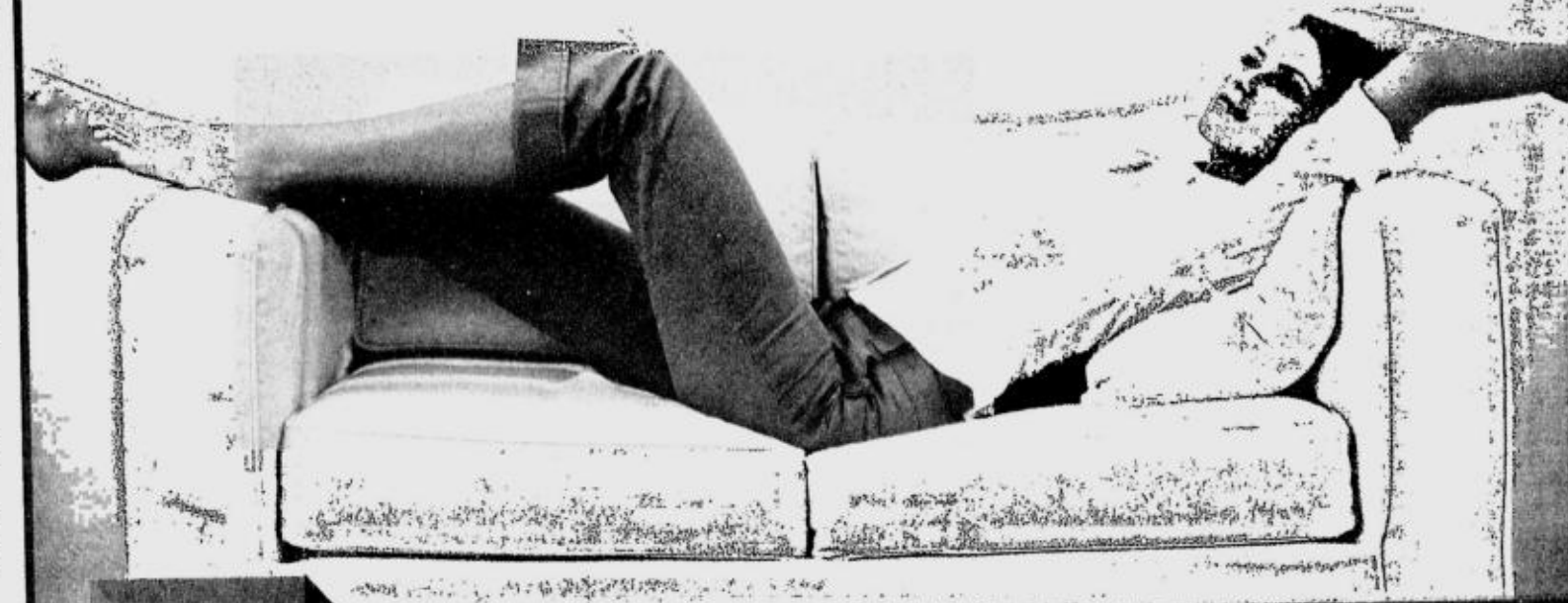
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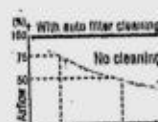


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ONE of the 43 prayer cells at The Touch of Glory Prayer Mountain. EDWIN BACASMAS

Somebody up there likes Don Michael Acelar de Leon

With a 'third man' to guide him, this Makati high school student has reaped honors both here and abroad



DE LEON: Wiser beyond his chronological age of 17.

RODEL ROTON

By Tarra Y. Quismundo

HE MAY HAVE GROWN UP WITHOUT a father but for 17-year-old Don Michael Acelar de Leon, a top graduate of the Makati Science High School, there was always the "third man in the house" to guide him.

"I've always told him that there were three of us in the family. Him, me and God," said De Leon's mother, Delia. "You know, it has always amazed me how he was even proud to tell others that I was a single parent as he was growing up," she added.

Not just filling the gaps

Keeping faith in a powerful force by his side and his mother to back him up, De Leon has proven to himself and to the world that life should be more than just filling up the gaps. Rather, life should be rising above what is missing.

"I never really felt the lack of a father. My mother, being my mom and dad at the same time,

was enough. I understood that this is my family, this is what God gave me. It was not a hindrance to be the best person that I could be," said De Leon who has won honors for the school, both here and abroad.

"Your friends would ask you, 'Don, where's your dad? You're always with your mom.' But this doesn't bother me. The truth is I come from a single-parent family. My mom and I are happy, even if I do not have a father," said the champion orator.

"He grew up with no father-figure, but that was not a hindrance," said Delia, who lives with her son in a modest rented house on JP Rizal in Makati City, just across City Hall.

Indeed, De Leon has exceeded his mother's expectations. He has spent a year as an exchange

student in Manor, Texas, in the United States, published his own book, won in several speech contests, and acted in stage plays.

The guy upstairs

Despite his accomplishments, De Leon, who spent his grade school days under the guidance of Salesian priests at the Don Bosco Technical Institute, was quick to give back the honor to the third man in the family, whom he endearingly called "the guy upstairs."

"I realized that in whatever you do, the gifts that only you have and the blessings you get everyday are not there just because you are good. There's always someone higher that's better than you that has given you what you know and what you have," he said.

De Leon has excelled in sever-

al oratorical competitions. Last year, he was named Makati City's Prinsipe ng Bigkasan and was one of the 10 finalists in the National Shakespeare Speech Competition.

CMMA finalist

De Leon's anthology of Filipino poems, a school project titled "Kuwerdas: Isang Pagkalabit sa Musika ng Buhay," was a finalist in the Best Literary Publication-High School Level in the 2004 Catholic Mass Media Awards. He was also editor of The Makati Science Vision, his school's official paper which took home various awards in the 2006 National Secondary Schools Press Conference in Aklan last February.

He brought his passion for writing to the US as an exchange student of the American Field Service Youth Exchange Program in Manor High School, Texas, from August 2004 to July 2005.

In Texas, De Leon landed the

lead role of Benedick in the junior production of William Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" at Manor High. For his convincing portrayal during an inter-school competition there, he was inducted into the International Thespian Society, an organization supporting high school theater worldwide.

Although he only ranked 13th among Makati Science's 120 graduating students, De Leon took home the most number of special awards, including Best in French, a subject only offered at the school.

Contented

"I cannot say that high school was easy because I put in a lot of work, I needed to sacrifice a lot. My standing in class may not be that high, but I explored a lot of myself and it brought good results. I'm happy with the fruits of my labor," he said.

De Leon added that he was looking forward to a colorful college life, having been granted a

full scholarship at the Ateneo de Manila University, where he plans to take up a communication course.

Good communicator

"I still have not seen myself in my 20s but I know what I want to be: I want to be a person who is very good at communicating, who is very good at expressing himself through arts, through music. But wherever the road may take me, I'll just accept it," he said.

Indeed, he has nothing to fear about the future because he would have always the "guy upstairs" looking out for him.

"Whenever I pray, before I do something, I don't ask God for me to win, that I answer all questions in the quiz bee," said De Leon. "What I do is, I tell him 'Lord, let's do this, let's do this together.' It's just right to do it with him. I don't ask him to give me strength, the courage. I only ask him to do it with me," De Leon said.



METROBRIEFS

Makati City's antipollution drive

MAKATI City's anti-pollution enforcers apprehended 2,321 drivers for smoke belching from January to March and collected nearly P500,000 in fines. Makati Pollution Control Office chief Reggie Suarez said most of the vehicles which were stopped were pick-up and delivery vans (983) owned by private companies, followed by trucks (856), cars (192), passenger jeeps (177), public buses (77) and taxis (36). The drivers of the smoke-belching vehicles were either fined P1,000 if it was their first offense, P2,000 for the second offense or P3,000 for the third offense. Meanwhile, Suarez said that he will also be deploying his men to alleys and secondary roads instead of concentrating on major thoroughfares. This will enable antipollution enforcers to go after smoke belchers who try to evade them by using secondary roads.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Taguig has new police chief

TAGUIG City's new police chief Supt. Alfred Corpuz yesterday said that he will first have to set his "own house in order" before dealing with the city's top problems of drugs and the proliferation of illegal vendors. Corpuz, the former chief of the Northern Police District Intelligence and Investigation Division, said he will conduct random drug tests among his men and crack down on policemen who are involved in illegal activities. "We can't effectively rid the city of crimes if we can't put order to our own backyard," he said. Corpuz added that he is studying the "peculiarities" in each barangay so that he can come up with tailor-made measures in enforcing peace and order in the city. "Each barangay has its own problems and concerns which should be attended to separately," he said. Corpuz assumed his new post last Monday.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Skyway closed

THE ENTIRE stretch of the Skyway from Bicutan in Parañaque to Buendia in Makati will be closed to traffic from April 13 and 14, from 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. "We will be closing the elevated skyway to give way to the repair and maintenance of the damaged ramp and other maintenance activities of roadway and facilities," PNCC Skyway Corp. President and CEO Wilfredo P. Cu said. "Other maintenance work such as cleaning of the on/off ramps and preventive maintenance of electrical fixture will also be done during this period," he added. Traffic directional signs will be installed at strategic areas to assist motorists, Cu said.

High places in Antipolo...

From page A17

plative and austere life," said Rose Abesia, house supervisor.

The rates are affordable—P275 per person for daytime retreats and P450 per person for overnight accommodations. A package for three days and two nights costs P750 per person. The fees already cover meals and snacks.

There are three other Catholic retreat centers in Antipolo City—the Assumption Retreat House along Sumulong Highway, Alberione Oasis of the Pious Disciples of Divine Master on Circumferential Road, and Good Shepherd Retreat House on Emerald Hills, also along Sumulong Highway. The Chancery of the Diocese of Antipolo provides the particulars through telephone no. 6976708.

Prayer Mountain

The Touch of Glory Prayer Mountain (TGPM) in Sitio Calumpang, Barangay San Jose in Antipolo City is the first prayer mountain facility in the country.

It was built in 1986 by the Bread of Life Ministries for people who seek, to use the words in a TGPM brochure, "the secret place of the Most High, not that they might escape the world, but that they might learn to conquer it."

The unpretentious facade makes a first-time visitor wonder where the mountain-high inspiration could come from. At first glance, there seems to be nothing extraordinary about the place, until you enter one of the 43 individual prayer cells.

Those who go on a retreat at



A PRAYER hut at the Touch of Glory Prayer Mountain. EDWIN BACASHAS

the prayer mountain are often reminded by their retreat leaders of this quotation from Amy Carmichael, a Christian missionary in India and author of many devotional classics: "God answers us in the deeps, never in the shallows of our soul."

After spending quiet moments inside a prayer cell, you can make your way on a downhill slope and settle in one of the huts to listen to the sounds of swaying foliage and bask in the bliss of bird watching.

Breathtaking view

There are several trails through the hills inside the compound. Behind the mission house are flights of steps carved on an uphill slope leading to a small landscaped plateau designed for meditation. It offers a view of the nearby mountains, which prompts one to

pray that the Creator would save what's left of them from the ravages of quarrying.

TGPM has a chapel, separate dormitories for men and women, attic rooms, function halls, conference rooms and a cafeteria. Visitors have to pre-register via cell phone no. 0917-8401288. It welcomes all believers from different churches and denominations.

Jesus himself, the reason for the Holy Week celebration, went off to the mountain to spend the whole night in prayer to God (Luke 6:12).

A spiritual retreat, according to a priest, is just an aid in finding the "high places." It makes a person better prepared to face the troubled world and through a life lived full of love, righteousness, justice and truthfulness.

Police welcome to dig, says Pasig lot owner

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SAYING HE HAS NOTHING TO hide, the owner of the compound in Pasig City where the police had dug up a swamp to look for the remains of a suspected drug peddler said he would allow further digging in the area.

"His only request is that the police give him prior notice," lawyer Raymond Fortun, counsel for lot owner Amin Imam Boratong, told the INQUIRER.

Still, he said his client was confident the police will not find any remains buried in the compound.

No buried bodies

"It is obvious that there are no bodies buried in the place," Fortun also said in an earlier interview, referring to 2,000-sq. m. Sitio Mapayapa, where police discovered more than 40 shanties serving as shabu restaurants on Feb. 10.

Police started digging up a swamp inside the compound on Tuesday morning after a witness said a drug peddler was ordered killed and buried in the compound by his superiors in October 2005. They stopped after two days when they found nothing.

Fortun said Boratong should not be linked to the operations of the shabu restaurants, just because he was the owner of the lot.

"This is for the police to prove, if they can show lease contracts

(between him and the illegal settlers)," Fortun added.

He said the illegal settlers were already on the compound when Boratong bought it for P6 million in August 2005. Four members of the Santos family owned the lot from 1993 until the land title was transferred to Boratong last year, according to records from the City Registry of Deeds.

Lot bought cheap

"The price was cheap because he will have to spend for the relocation of the illegal settlers," Fortun explained.

He said Boratong, who is into trading, was planning to put up a 30-door apartment on the lot and was just saving enough money to relocate the illegal settlers.

Philippine National Police Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force chief Director Marcelo Ele, meanwhile, vowed to resume digging up the compound, even if Billardo Torres alias Bernardo had already surfaced, claiming he was the dead drug peddler the police were hoping to unearth.

The female police witness had earlier identified Torres from a picture as the one who was killed inside the compound. But after seeing Torres on television, the witness later told AIDSOTF operatives Torres was not the man.

"The witness possibly just got disoriented," Ele said.

Lanot family slams probers

By Dona Pazibugan

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE FIRST anniversary of ex-Pasig City congressman Henry Lanot's death, his family assailed authorities for the slow pace of the investigation into his killing.

Lanot was shot dead while he was having lunch with former Caloocan City congressman Romeo Santos at the Jade Palace Restaurant in Pasig City on April 13 last year.

According to witnesses, the lone gunman approached Lanot's table and shot him in the head. The suspect then casually walked out of the restaurant.

"It is exactly one year already and yet no progress in the investigation has been made," Lanot's family said in a statement issued yesterday.

"It is really very disgusting and disappointing to us that until now, the authorities are facing difficulties for the early resolution of the case," the statement, which was signed by Lanot's son, Henry II, said.

The family urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to order the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation to give priority to the probe into his killing.

Lanot's family had earlier claimed that politics was the motive behind his killing. The former congressman's supporters had even pointed to Lanot's political opponent, Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio, as the mastermind.

Eusebio, who was out of the country when Lanot was killed, had denied the accusation.



A SPRAWLING garden with tall trees leads to the Our Lady of Antipolo Retreat House.

ROMY HOMILLADA

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

Text us your feedback:
inquirer go name/age/city/message
to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Crying an ocean when homesickness hits

By Roy V. Señeres
Contributor

THE WORST ENEMY OF AN OVERSEAS Filipino Worker (OFW) is not a cruel employer, but homesickness. Whether or not an OFW is treated well by his employer; whether or not he is macho, he is often helpless when homesickness attacks.

The pain of being separated from loved ones, and the constant fear that something bad may happen to any one of them back home, gnaws at the very soul of an OFW who often has a two-year employment contract to finish.

I worked overseas for 15 years. I started in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), as labor attaché from 1983 to 1990, then assumed the same post in Washington D.C., United States until 1994.

I was fortunate that my family—Minnie, my wife; and children Tommy, Christian, Roy Jr., Hannah, Hazel, and Christopher—were with me all the time.

In late 1994, I was appointed by President Fidel V. Ramos as ambassador to the UAE where I started my diplomatic career as labor attaché.

Lonely ambassador

It was while I was ambassador from 1994 to 1998 that my children began to leave one by one to pursue their college education in the Philippines. When the youngest, Christopher, left in 1993 to study in Manila, his dotting mom left too, leaving me by my lonesome in Abu Dhabi.

But unlike an OFW, who is bound by a two-year employment contract, I could come home for "consultation" with the secretary of foreign affairs anytime. I had access to all sorts of activities to lift my spirits. And I was busy as a bee, too, as I was up to my neck with countless concerns regarding the 120,000-strong Filipino community in the Emirates.

But, in the evening, when I was alone in the house, tears would fall as I longed for my family and home.

How much lonelier is it for a young Filipino woman working as a domestic in the house of complete strangers, whose culture, customs, food, and idiosyncrasies are totally different from hers? Domestic helpers comprise about half of the total population of eight million OFWs dispersed in various parts of the world. "Dispersed" as in diaspora.

Like the Jews

In the history of humankind, only the Jews suffered this kind of fate when they were dispersed from Palestine in the 6th century B.C.

To say millions of OFWs cry a river every night would be an understatement. To be more exact, they cry an ocean every night of their lives as OFWs.

Coming in second as the OFWs' worst enemy are cruel employers. And they are legion. As labor attaché in Abu Dhabi, my family and I often provided shelter to runaway housemaids in our three-bedroom apartment.

At any given day, the number of runaway housemaids averaged 15. Some were able to return to the Philippines or find another employer. But, as they left, the same number took their place.

More often than not, my daughters Hannah and Hazel, minors at the time, gave up their own room for the OFWs. Sometimes, when I had more "refugees," some of them slept in the corridor, receiving room, or under the dining table.

Sexual abuse

The housemaids complained of sexual abuse, i.e., rape or acts of lasciviousness; physical abuse, inability to cope with the work, non-payment or underpayment of salary, no rest day, and other forms of maltreatment. Almost everyone suffered from depression due to homesickness.

Most of those who complained of sexual abuse begged me and my wife not to tell anyone about their ordeal. They would ask me to collect their unpaid salaries so they could go home.

The married women did not want their husbands to know of their traumatic experience fearing rejection. The unmarried ones did not want their parents to know, fearing it could hasten their parents' journey to the grave.

Our small apartment virtually became a receptacle of all the woes, the pains, the grief of un-

fortunate OFWs. My friend, columnist Ramon Tulfo, witnessed this endless stream of OFWs who sought shelter in our house when he visited Abu Dhabi in 1987.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, who was secretary of labor at the time, also saw this when he and Pat Sto. Tomas, then his undersecretary, visited the UAE in 1988.

Prayerful ambassador

I was not a very prayerful person in my younger years. But my posting to the UAE as labor attaché, with the awesome responsibility of protecting and

overseeing the welfare of 120,000 OFWs, made me one.

I was alone. There were no officers of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) nor assistant labor attaché to help me. The daily parade of weeping people was debilitating not only to the body but the spirit as well.

I felt helpless at times and I had no one to turn to but God. Several times I knelt down in the privacy of my office to pray for strength and for intercession for my kababayan.

I would ask the Lord Almighty to send angels and saints to households

where Filipinas worked as housemaids to guard them day and night.

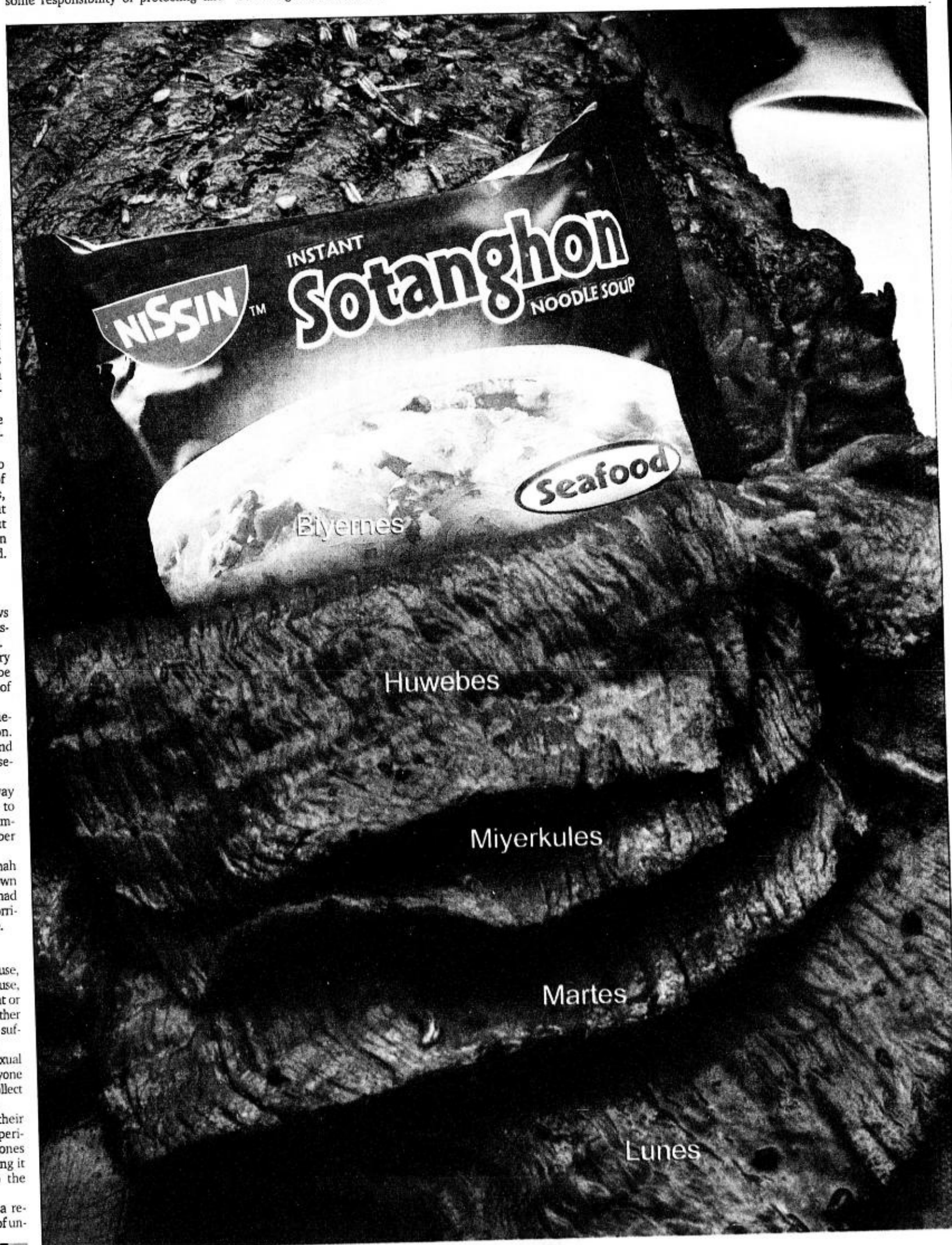
One day, I composed a "Labor Attaché's Prayer" that I sent to my fellow attachés in various parts of the world.

Runaway maids

I thank my wife and children for helping me and understanding the kind of job that I was doing. When my kids reached adolescence, I saw their need for privacy, but they readily accepted my explanation that the runaway housemaids had no one else to run to but us, and moreover, I said "anyone of them could be the Virgin Mary

in disguise." Now the entire family's favorite passage in the Bible is: "Whatever it is that you do to the least of your brethren, you do it unto God." And the entire family's motto is: "The purpose of life is to empathize, sympathize, and to help."

When will the Filipino diaspora end? It will end when that which drove them away—massive graft and corruption—will no longer stalk the OFW's motherland. When billions of pesos will no longer be pocketed by the crooks in our midst and will instead be spent in activities that will jumpstart the economy and create millions of jobs.



Huwebes

Miyerkules

Martes

Lunes

FAST FACTS

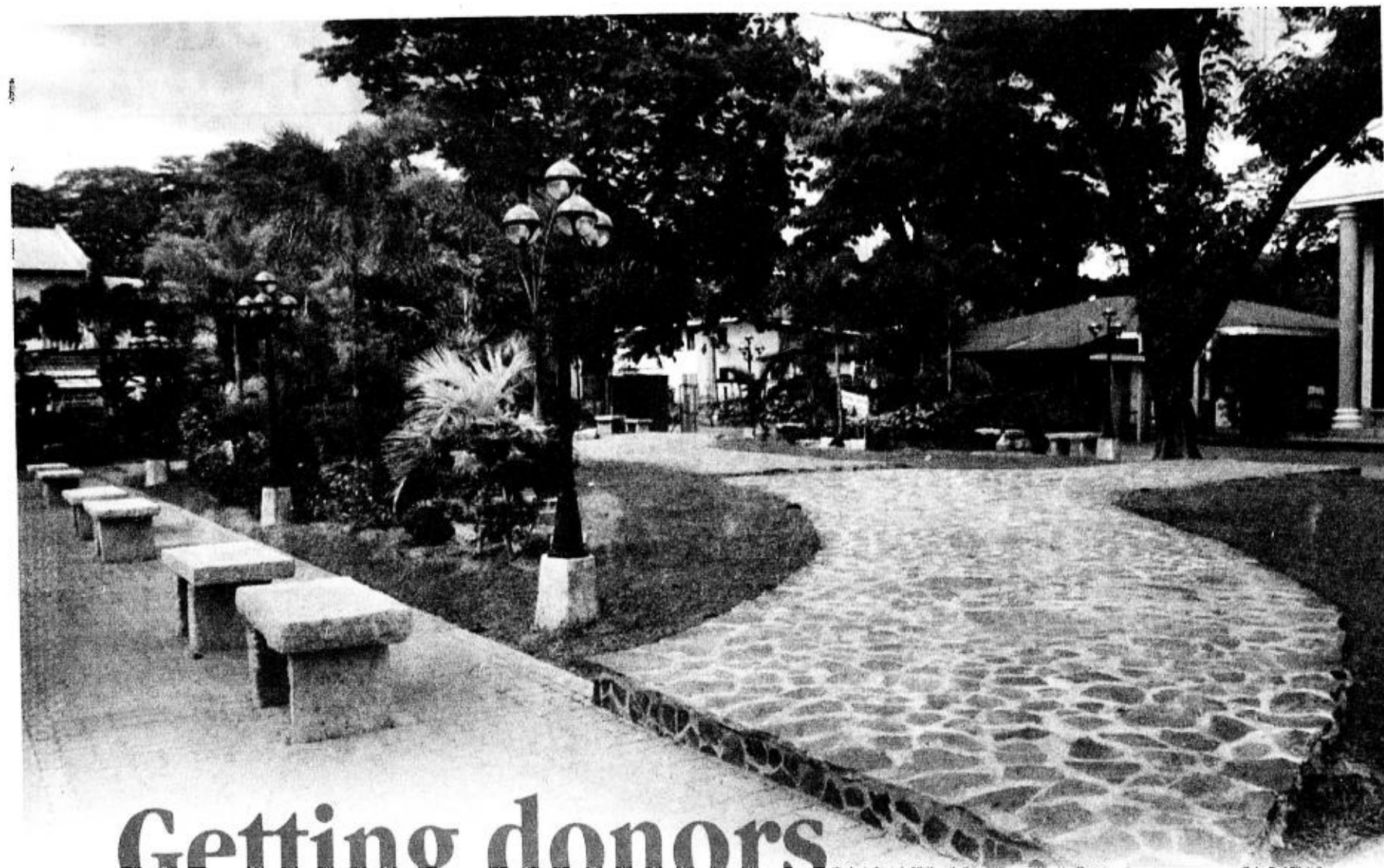
Overseas Filipino Workers by region
(October 2003 & 2004, in thousands)

Region	2003	2004
National Capital Region	182	184
Calabarzon	170	181
Central Luzon	119	149
Western Visayas	98	92
Iloos Region	82	86
Cagayan Valley	63	57
Central Visayas	52	49
Davao Region	32	34
Ilocos Region	32	32
ARMM	13	31
SOCCKSARGEN	31	30
Northern Mindanao	27	28
Cordillera Administrative Reg.	20	24
Eastern Visayas	18	24
Zamboanga Peninsula	18	22
MIMAROPA	14	11
Caraga	10	10
Total	982	1,064

Source: National Statistics Office Survey of Overseas Filipino Workers
PDI Research

Ngayong Semana Santa, mag-seafood na.
Handog ng Nissin.





Getting donors from abroad like a walk in the park

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

POZORRUBIO, PANGASINAN—SOMEWHERE IN THIS town's center is a modern park with a manmade 20-foot wide waterfall as its focal point.

The waterfall of the Friendship Park is a testament to the close relationship between the Pozorrubio residents here and abroad who never fail to give something back to their land of birth.

Mayor Arterio Chan said Overseas Filipino Workers from this town sponsor different projects and the waterfall was made through donations of natives of Pozorrubio now based in Ontario, Canada.

"They wanted to construct waiting sheds," Chan said, "but we already have plenty of waiting sheds. So I suggested that they put a waterfall in the park instead, and they agreed."

The Friendship Park was first established through the help of OFWs from Hong Kong.

"But it was not well-maintained anymore, so we told the Hong Kong OFWs that we will redesign it, and they did not oppose," Chan said.

Thus what used to be a drab wall was transformed into a lively waterfall surrounded by different kinds of plants.

The proceeds from the 2004 and 2005 fiesta souvenir programs went to the development of the 1,000 sq.-m. Friendship Park.

The Pozorrubio Cultural Association of Ontario, Canada, headed by Eloisa Reyes, donated the waterfall and the local government also chipped in for additional expenses.

This town regularly gets help from its almost 1,800 OFWs.



THE PARK (top) was built by native sons and daughters who are making good in Canada. (Above) The park's main attraction, the waterfall enlivens one drab wall of the 1,000 sq.-m. Friendship Park.

First
funded by
workers in
Hong
Kong, the
redesigned
park with a
waterfall
is now a
legacy of
1,800
workers
for their
hometown

Priest runs 'Pinoy Big Brother's House' in Taiwan

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

AN OLD HOUSE, NUMBER 250 SHIN-Yi Street in Taichung City, is a favorite destination of overseas Filipino workers in Taiwan.

When the INQUIRER visited in 2003, all five floors of the house were filled with people.

With people talking in Ilocano, Kapampangan, Ilonggo, Tagalog and other languages, a visitor remarked, "Parang nandito na ang buong Pilipinas (It's like the whole Philippines is here)!"

Downstairs, a poster-size signage above the steel door announced this was the Pastoral Center for Filipino Migrant Workers.

"The same old house... still serves as the center and is fondly called 'Pinoy Big Brother House' by OFWs [who have just arrived here]," the "Big Brother" in the house, Fr. Antonio Salvania, said in an e-mail to the INQUIRER Tuesday.

Salvania doesn't mind the center's latest moniker, borrowed from ABS-CBN's reality television show.

The Catholic Church opened the place in 1995 precisely to give OFWs a place that would feel a little like home.

"Filipinos still come here to spend weekends or days-off, meet their countrymen, share stories, enjoy one another's company, cook and eat Filipino dishes, and experience a real home away from home," said Salvania, 57, the center's chaplain.

The center is many things to workers.

It is a refuge for runaways or those who escape from their employers for reasons like non-payment of wages



OFW SHEPHERD. Fr. Antonio Salvania (left) provides spiritual guidance and refuge to all Filipino workers in Taiwan.

and non-stop work.

Spiritual counseling

Rather than stay in jail for weeks, undocumented workers seek shelter in the center after reporting to the foreign affairs police.

"Surrenderers," as they are called, process their documents for their return to the Philippines in the shelter of the house.

Victims of sexual, physical and other forms of abuses also seek refuge at the center while they pursue their cases in court.

At any time of day or night, Salvania gives spiritual counseling to Filipinos by phone or in person.

Everyday he helps in at least six labor-related cases. He also answers inquiries about labor policies.

In between, he visits some Filipinos jailed for various offenses.

Sundays are reserved for celebrating Mass or performing the other sacraments at the Catholic Church on Kushing Road.

Salvania wouldn't describe his work tiring. "Hectic," he said, was a better word.

"I was not prepared for this work," he admitted.

Salvania thought that priesthood (he completed high school in a seminary in his native Quezon) meant the work his uncle and a cousin, both priests, did in the communities they were assigned.

He did not expect getting a new ministry though he was familiar with the phenomenon of labor migration, which he said was "one of the unwanted results of globalization."

He came face to face with the issue in 1995 when then Lucena City Bishop Ruben Profugo asked him to serve in Taiwan.

That year, Bishop Joseph Wang of Taichung asked Profugo for a Filipino priest to replace the deacon attending to the spiritual needs of the growing OFW population in the central Taiwan city.

The city's Filipino workers that year was estimated at between 7,000 and 12,000. When Salvania arrived, the OFWs began hearing Mass in Filipino. (Taichung has four or five Catholic churches but Masses are celebrated in Chinese.)

Protection

Not long after, Salvania realized the need to put up a center for OFWs.

"There were many Filipinos who hung around after Mass. They had nowhere or didn't know where to go. But because I live in the rectory in a Chinese community and because I was not the parish priest, I asked the bishop to allow me to establish a center where Filipinos... could go for their spiritual needs," Salvania said.

"The one-room flat, which was all that we could afford [to rent] then, proved to be very small... We moved to a three-story apartment [after two years] but it was still small because we accommodated many problematic OFWs," he said.

The first years were more difficult. The center catered to many workers but only had one staff member, Salvania. Also, the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (Meco) had not yet set up its Taichung office.

Hope for workers

Salvania relied on divine help for the OFWs protection, as he dealt with numerous cases of work-related injuries, even death, among OFWs.

He composed the "Prayer of OFWs": "Oh my God, protect me from all dangers while I do the work you have given me in this foreign land. Let your holy angels guard me, shelter me in your Son's Sacred Heart and bring me home safe and sound to my family as I finish my contract through Christ our Lord, Amen."

Salvania, initially overwhelmed by the challenges, coped by asking for God's intervention in everything he did for his *kabayans*.

Things have eased up in recent years as he noted workers were getting more support.

Additional priests were assigned in key cities of Taiwan and Meco opened an extension office in Taichung.

This move, according to Assistant Labor Attache Mae Josol, prevented illegal recruitment and unfair employment practices.

Josol said Filipino workers in Taiwan totaled 69,426 in 2002 representing the third biggest group of foreign workers in the country, after Thais and Indonesians.

Salvania said Indonesians, Sri Lankans and even Americans had asked the center for help.

He stressed the need to "give (OFWs) hope", but said they were "willing victims."

"They thought that Taiwan is the answer to their dreams, a greener pasture. *Kung ako ang tatanungin*, I would not advise them to come here," he said.

He cited exorbitant placement fees from brokers or recruiters.

It was also tough being in a setting where cultural values and language were very different.

"They (OFWs) need the Church. They need help. They need a place while they're away working for their families. It's lonely out here," he said.

Bush opposed to citizenship for illegal aliens

WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Saturday signaled his opposition to granting American citizenship to those who had crossed the US border illegally after a Republican-sponsored immigration reform plan collapsed in the US Senate.

"We must ensure that those who break our laws are not granted an automatic path to citizenship," Bush said in his weekly radio address.

The comment places Bush at odds with two key proposals considered by the Senate over the past two weeks, which offer legalization—and eventual citizenship—to all or most of an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants currently living in the United States.

Under a measure introduced by Democrat Edward Kennedy and Republican John McCain, the undocumented workers already in the country would have been allowed to apply for temporary legal status for six years, pay a \$2,000 fine, and apply for citizenship following a background check and an English language test.

When it became apparent that this proposal would not get enough votes, Republican Senators Chuck Hagel and Mel Martinez came up with a compromise that divides all illegals into three categories.

Under their plan, those who have been in the United States for five or more years would qualify for a work visa and an opportunity to apply for citizenship. Those with less than two years of residency would be asked to leave while the rest would be able to participate in a future guest worker program.

The Hagel-Martinez compromise collapsed amid bitter recrimination on Friday after Democratic Minority Leader Harry Reid moved to drastically limit the number al-

lowed to the floor and then supporters of the measure failed to muster the votes to cut off debate.

The president has not formally endorsed either of the bills. But White House spokesperson Dana Perino said Bush believed that all those who have crossed the border illegally have broken the law.

"We have said it for a while ... that he believes that people who have gone into the country illegally

should not have an automatic path to citizenship," Perino told AFP.

She said the president believed that the estimated 11 million illegal aliens currently in the country "would need to get in line behind people" waiting to settle in the United States lawfully.

But Perino stopped short of saying Bush would demand that illegal immigrants return to their home countries, saying "those details are being worked out."

AFP

US considers use of nukes against Iran, says report

WASHINGTON—THE ADMINISTRATION of President George W. Bush is planning a massive bombing campaign against Iran, including use of bunker-buster nuclear bombs to destroy a key Iranian suspected nuclear weapons facility, The New Yorker magazine reported in its April 17 issue.

The article by investigative journalist Seymour Hersh said that Bush and others in the White House have come to view Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as a potential Adolf Hitler.

"That's the name they're using,"

the report quoted a former senior intelligence official as saying.

A senior unnamed Pentagon adviser is quoted in the article as saying that "this White House believes that the only way to solve the problem is to change the power structure in Iran, and that means war."

The former intelligence officials depicts planning as "enormous," "hectic" and "operational," Hersh writes.

One former defense official said the military planning was premised on a belief that "a sustained bombing campaign in Iran will humiliate

the religious leadership and lead the public to rise up and overthrow the government," The New Yorker pointed out.

In recent weeks, the president has quietly initiated a series of talks on plans for Iran with a few key senators and members of the House of Representatives, including at least one Democrat, the report said.

One of the options under consideration involves the possible use of a bunker-buster tactical nuclear weapon, such as the B61-11, to insure the destruction of Iran's main centrifuge plant at Natanz, Hersh

writes.

But the former senior intelligence official said the attention given to the nuclear option has created serious misgivings inside the military, and some officers have talked about resigning after an attempt to remove the nuclear option from the evolving war plans in Iran failed, according to the report.

"There are very strong sentiments within the military against brandishing nuclear weapons against other countries," the magazine quotes the Pentagon adviser as saying.

AFP

Study shows no diet soda link to cancer

A NEW STUDY ON THE ARTIFICIAL SWEETENER aspartame may make diet soda lovers breathe a little easier.

A large federally funded study done by government researchers at the National Cancer Institute found no link between the consumption of aspartame and elevated risks of brain cancer and blood-related cancers like leukemia.

Aspartame is sold under the brand names Nutra-Sweet and Equal and is found in drinks like Diet Coke, Diet Pepsi, Diet Snapple and Sugar Free Kool-Aid.

NYT

Episcopalians told to be cautious in elevating homosexual bishops

NEW YORK—AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH PANEL studying the furor over the denomination's first openly gay bishop proposed Friday that dioceses use "very considerable caution" from now on in electing bishops with same-sex partners, but stopped short of the moratorium critics demanded.

The commission also recommended that the American church offer "apology and repentance" for the turmoil its actions caused within the global Anglican Communion, and said dioceses should stop creating blessing ceremonies for same-gender couples, at least temporarily.

The suggestions are among several that will go before a June meeting of the top Episcopal legislative body, called the General Convention, which

can revise or reject the proposals. The outcome of their debate will be critical, shaping not only the future of the American church, but also its role as the US representative of world Anglicanism.

The communion has been in disarray since 2003, when delegates to the last General Convention approved the election of V. Gene Robinson as New Hampshire bishop. Robinson lives with his longtime male partner, and his consecration was greeted by many Episcopalians as a triumph for gay acceptance.

However, the majority of overseas Anglican leaders are conservatives who believe the Bible bars homosexual relationships. They are demanding that the Episcopal Church adhere to that interpretation or leave the communion.

AP

WORLD BRIEFS

Still in ruins 6 months after quake

KALAS CHUNGRI, Pakistan—Six months after an earthquake killed more than 80,000 people in Pakistan, it's only gotten tougher. Despite a massive international relief effort, aid workers are still struggling to reach isolated communities beneath these snow-capped peaks, where thousands of crudely built stone houses were flattened by the 7.6-magnitude quake on Oct. 8, 2005. Reconstruction of 600,000 permanent homes across the quake zone has scarcely begun, and many are desperate, mired deeper in poverty than ever before. Aid efforts to date have provided emergency relief, prevented disease from spreading and kept people alive through the bitter winter months—allaying fears that frigid temperatures could lead to a "second wave" of deaths. The tremor left 3.5 million people homeless. Some 200,000 went into camps—most of which the government says will be shut by Monday—while the rest sheltered in tents or tin-roofed shacks.



QUAKE survivor cries in camp.

AFP

Israel strike kills 6 Palestinians

JERUSALEM—Six Palestinians were killed Friday night in an Israeli air strike on the Gaza Strip, as the Jewish state intensified shelling around Gaza City in a bid to halt Palestinian rocket fire. An Israeli aircraft fired three missiles at a training base of the militant Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) group in the town of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, Palestinian security and medical sources said. One missile targeted a vehicle and the other two a building with activists inside it, the sources said. Six people were killed in the raid, including a local PRC leader, Iyad Abu al-Aynin, and a child, said Ali Moussa, a doctor at the town's hospital. Fifteen others were also injured in the air strike, he said.

AFP

Tornadoes kill 11 in Tennessee

NASHVILLE, Tennessee—A line of severe thunderstorms and tornadoes marched across the southern United States, peeling away roofs, overturning cars and killing at least 11 people in Tennessee, officials said. It was the second wave of violent weather to hit the state in less than a week. Last weekend, thunderstorms and tornadoes killed 24 people in the western part of the state and destroyed more than 1,000 homes and buildings. The storms raked an area from northern Mississippi to northern Virginia as they moved to the northeast late Friday after developing from a low-pressure system in the central Plains.

AP

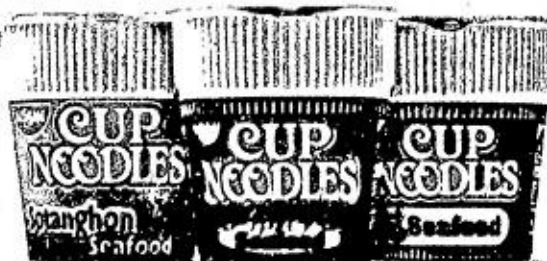
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

President who hates leaks is leaker-in-chief?

By Tom Raum

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush insists a president "better mean what he says." Those words could return to haunt him.

After long denouncing leaks of all kinds, Bush is confronted with a statement, unchallenged by his aides, that he authorized a leak of classified material to undermine a critic of the Iraq war.

The allegation in the CIA leak case threatens the credibility of a president already falling in the polls, and it gives Democrats fresh material to accuse him of hypocrisy.

"In politics, what gets bad gets worse," said GOP strategist Ed Rogers. "And we've been on a bad roll for quite some time. We're in an environment now where every mistake is a metaphor."

Critics were quick to portray the Bush-leak report as a fresh sign of a failed Iraq policy, manipulated intelligence and a lack of presidential veracity. Honesty was once seen by Americans as one of Bush's strongest character traits, but polls show that perception has waned in Bush's second term.

Causing the furor is a court filing that revealed that I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Vice President Dick Cheney's former top aide, told a federal grand jury that Bush authorized him to leak classified information on Iraq to reporters in mid-2003.

Libby is charged with lying and obstructing an investigation into whether the administration intentionally revealed the identity



BUSH

of a CIA operative, Valerie Plame, to undermine her husband's public criticism of the Iraq war.

As president, Bush has wide latitude to declassify material. And there was nothing in the legal papers filed by Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald to suggest Bush or Cheney did anything illegal, or had specifically authorized Libby to identify Plame.

Still, the report put Bush and Cheney at the center of the alleged administration effort to leak classified material to bolster its case for invading Iraq and to discredit war critics, including Plame's husband, former US Ambassador Joseph Wilson.

Bush often has denounced leaks and pledged to punish the leakers. He has expressed pride in a disciplined White House where leaks are infrequent.

"It was a shameful act for someone to disclose this very important program in a time of war," he told a Dec. 19 news conference, speaking of the leaking of the National Security Agency's warrantless surveillance program.

Iraq braces for reprisals

More violence feared after 3 suicide bombers kill 79

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—SUICIDE BOMBERS, ONE dressed as a woman, blasted worshippers as they left a Shiite mosque after Friday prayers, killing at least 79 people and wounding more than 160 in the deadliest attack in Iraq this year.

The horrific explosions at the Buratha mosque are likely to stoke the already raw tensions between Shiite and Sunni Muslims. The US ambassador warned in an interview published Friday that sectarian civil war in Iraq could enflame the entire Middle East.

Rescuers raced to and from the mosque, ferrying bodies from the walled compound on blood-soaked wooden pushcarts and loading them on the beds of pickup trucks. City officials urged Iraqis to donate blood for the wounded.

Inside the mosque, pools of blood stained the chipped and crumbling floor next to a red prayer rug. A firefighter wearing a yellow helmet and yellow gloves knelt down to inspect the scene.

Police said there were two suicide bombings at the mosque, and an Associated Press photographer saw evidence of two blasts—one at the outer wall surrounding the compound and another at the entrance to the mosque building. The blast in the entrance likely killed some worshippers inside.

But Jalal Eddin al-Sagheer, the preacher at the mosque and one of the country's leading politicians, said there were three bombings. One assailant came through the women's security checkpoint and blew up first, he said.

The preacher, who was not injured, said another raced into the mosque's courtyard while a third tried to enter his office before they both detonated their explosives.

Al-Sagheer accused Sunni politicians and clerics of waging "a campaign of distortions and lies against the Buratha mosque, claiming that it has Sunni prisoners and mass graves of Sunnis."

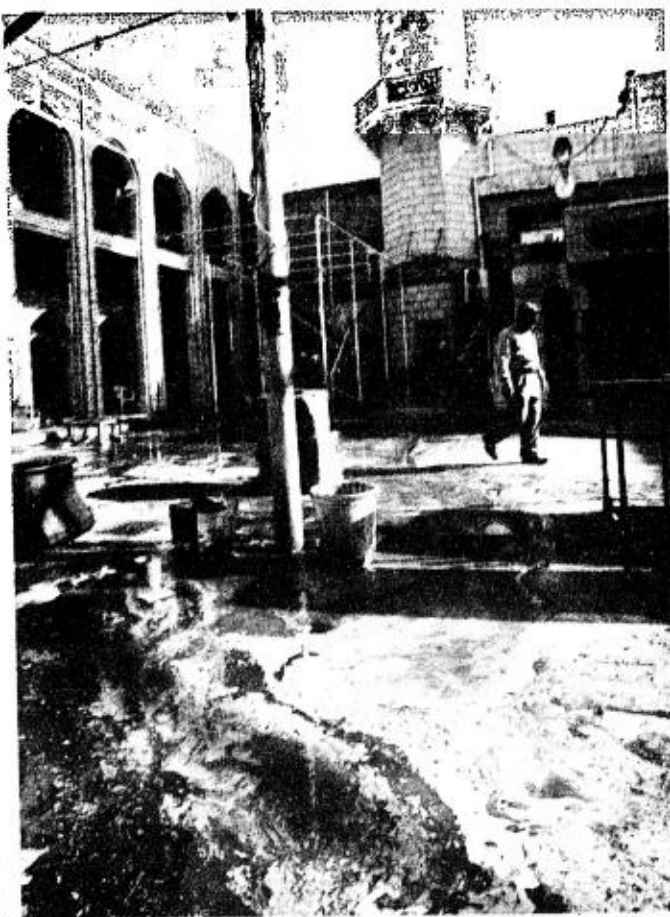
"Shiites are the ones who are targeted as part of this dirty sectarian war waged against them as the world watches silently," he told Al-Arabiya television.

Mainstream Sunni Arab politicians condemned the bombings, calling on all religious and political leaders to come together in the interest of national unity.

"Bloodshed is forbidden," Sunni lawmaker Adnan al-Dulaimi told Iraqi television.

Also Friday, the US military reported the deaths of four more American service members, including one who died from wounds suffered in Baghdad. Two Marines and a soldier were killed Thursday.

The mosque attack occurred as worshippers left Friday prayers, the main weekly religious service. Several hours earlier, the interior ministry warned the public to avoid crowds near mosques and markets because of a car bomb threat.



A MAN walks through a pool of blood in the Baratha mosque in Baghdad, April 7. Three suicide bombers killed Friday at least 79 people and wounded 160 as worshippers left a popular Baghdad Shiite mosque in the deadliest attack in Iraq this year.

AFP

"I heard an explosion after we finished praying," said Jamal Hussein, a 40-year-old teacher who was one of the wounded worshippers.

"Next thing, I found myself in the hospital," he said from his hospital bed, his left arm wrapped in bandages.

AP

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Phone Pals tame Bulls as Cardona waxes hot

GAMES TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
 4:10 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs Coca-Cola
 6:35 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs Barangay Ginebra

DUMAGUETE CITY—MAC CARDONA HAS the knack for making impossible shots look easy.

The Talk 'N Text rookie stunned Red Bull with his acrobatic moves and carried the Phone Pals to a 99-93 win in the Gran Matador-PBA Philippine Cup at the Lamberto Macias Sports Center here.

The former UAAP MVP out of De La Salle University knocked in 12 of his 14 points in the pivotal quarter that included his trademark teardrop shot to ignite a huge finishing kick by the Phone Pals.

Enrico Villanueva racked up seven straight points and Topex Robinson scored on a putback as Red Bull moved within 80-82 midway in the fourth before Cardona made his move.

Asi Taulava also shared the limelight with Cardona by banging in 23 points while Vic Pablo and Harvey Carey scattered 14 points each for the Phone Pals, who picked up their third win in seven games.

With Lordy Tugade and Junthy Valenzuela faltering from long range, Robinson tried to keep the Bulls alive with several incursions down the stretch. The pint-sized Red Bull playmaker scored 11 of his 18 points in the final period.

Robinson finished with 18 points along with Mick Pennisi and Villanueva added 14, seven of them coming in the fourth.

The Bulls absorbed their third straight setback and fell into a tie with the Air21 Express at 3-5.

Pennisi's twin three-pointers prevented the Phone Pals from blowing the game wide open, 69-74, but John Ferriols converted off the glass and Poch Junio added a free throw that opened a 77-71 lead for Talk 'N Text.

Meanwhile, coach Binky Pavis tries to lead his Coca-Cola Tigers to a victory over the Sta. Lucia Realtors today in a bid to snare an All-Star coaching stint in Cagayan de Oro City on April 27-29.

A Coca-Cola victory will give the Tigers a 6-2 record, a full game ahead of the Purefoods Giants (5-3). San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico already clinched the first coaching slot in the All-Star with a win over Purefoods last Friday.

In the other game, Barangay Ginebra must de-

feat the Beermen and pray that the Tigers succumb to the Realtors for coach Siot Tanquingcen to get a crack at the other All-Star coaching slot.

The scores:

TNT 99—Taulava 23, Cardona 14, Pablo 14, Carey 14, Miller

10, Ferriols 9, Avenido 8, Junio 4, Alapag 3.

RED BULL 93—Pennisi 18, Robinson 18, Villanueva 14, Tugade 13, Bagulo 9, Forancler 8, Valenzuela 4, Feñi 4, Najorda 3, Bugla 2, Alvarez 0, Ybanez 0.

Quarters: 21-26, 49-47, 74-69, 99-93

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Toyota Otis shares top

Games Today (Olivarez Sports Center, Parañaque)
 2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Harbour Centre
 4 p.m.—Magnolia Ice Cream vs Hapee-PCU

TOYOTA OTIS FOUND AN UNLIKELY hero in Patrick Cabahug yesterday as the Sparks scored a come-from-behind 73-65 win over Montaña Pawnshop to join a three-way tie for the lead in the 2006 PBL Unity Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

Cabahug, nephew of former PBA star Elmer Cabahug, scored all his 10 points in the final quarter, including two 3-point shots as the Sparks completed an amazing comeback from 20 points down in the second quarter.

With their dramatic win, the Sparks gained a piece of the lead with Rain or Shine and the Jewels at 4-1.

Toyota Otis coach Louie Alas also credited the team's stifling defense for their victory.

Actually, it was an all-Cebuano show for the day as Jojo Tangkay produced an MVP performance to help the Elasto Painters score a 71-65 win over TeleTech.

The Sparks got off to a slow start, scoring only six points in the first quarter and fell behind as many as 20 points, 22-42, late in the second quarter. They slowly inched their way until Cabahug finally caught fire.

Unlike in the team's stunning loss to the Jewels last Tuesday, Tangkay dished out an all-around performance this time that included a team-high 17 points.

The scores:

First Game

RAIN OR SHINE 71—Tangkay 17, Reyes 12, Orbeta 10, Cabatu 9, Malabanan 7, Sta. Maria 6, Ortiguerra 5, Tan 3, Emano 2, Sagad 0, Enrile 0.

TELETECH 65

—Latoreno 17, Mercado 13, Gellig 11, Capus 8, Duncil 6, Doruelo 4, Estrada 2, Villamin 2, Bughao 2, Tolentino 0, Mendoza 0, Aquino 0, Sierra 0.

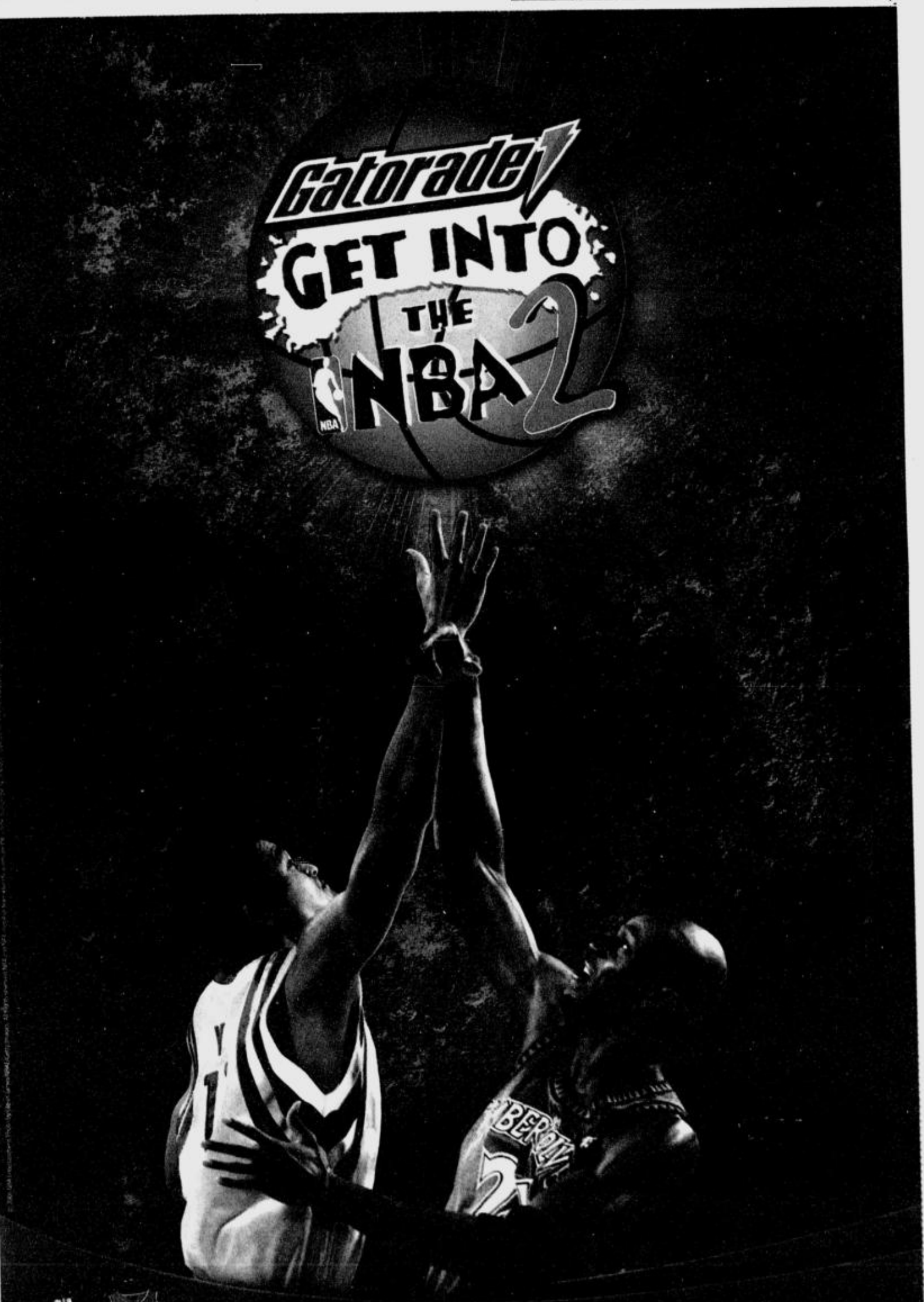
Quarters: 21-12, 33-29, 65-44, 71-65.

Second Game

TOYOTA OTIS 73—Aban 15, Cabahug 10, Dvance 10, Andaya 8, Aldave 7, Bautista 6, Fajardo 4, Coronel 3, Daa 3, Rodriguez 3, Baluyot 2, Casio 2, Oreta 0, Larong 0.

MONTAÑA 65—Juntila 15, Dela Cuesta 10, Bagulo 9, Bono 8, Bonus 6, Rodriguez 6, Compton 4, Vergara 4, Evangelista 2, Espiritu 1, Guerrero 0, Atablanco 0, Magpayo 0.

Quarters: 6-25, 26-44, 46-55, 73-65.



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Abundo says stakeholders must include other leagues

FOR TISHA ABUNDO, PRESIDENT OF THE Federation of School Leagues and chairperson of the School Sports Commission of the Basketball Association of the President (BAP), the four stakeholders of the newly formed Pilipinas Basketball are not representative of local basketball.

The four—the Philippine Basketball Association, the Philippine Basketball League, the University Athletic Association of the Philippines and the National Collegiate Athletics Association—form the backbone of Pilipinas Basketball, a new group established to take the place of the Philippine Olympic Committee-excluded BAP.

But Abundo, who is also the current president of the National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA), which counts 13 member-schools, said it is preposterous for the four associations to claim that they represent the basketball community of the entire country.

"How can they claim to represent the country when all of them are based in Metro Manila, and two of them, the PBA and the PBL, are professional leagues?" asked Abundo, a former Commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC).

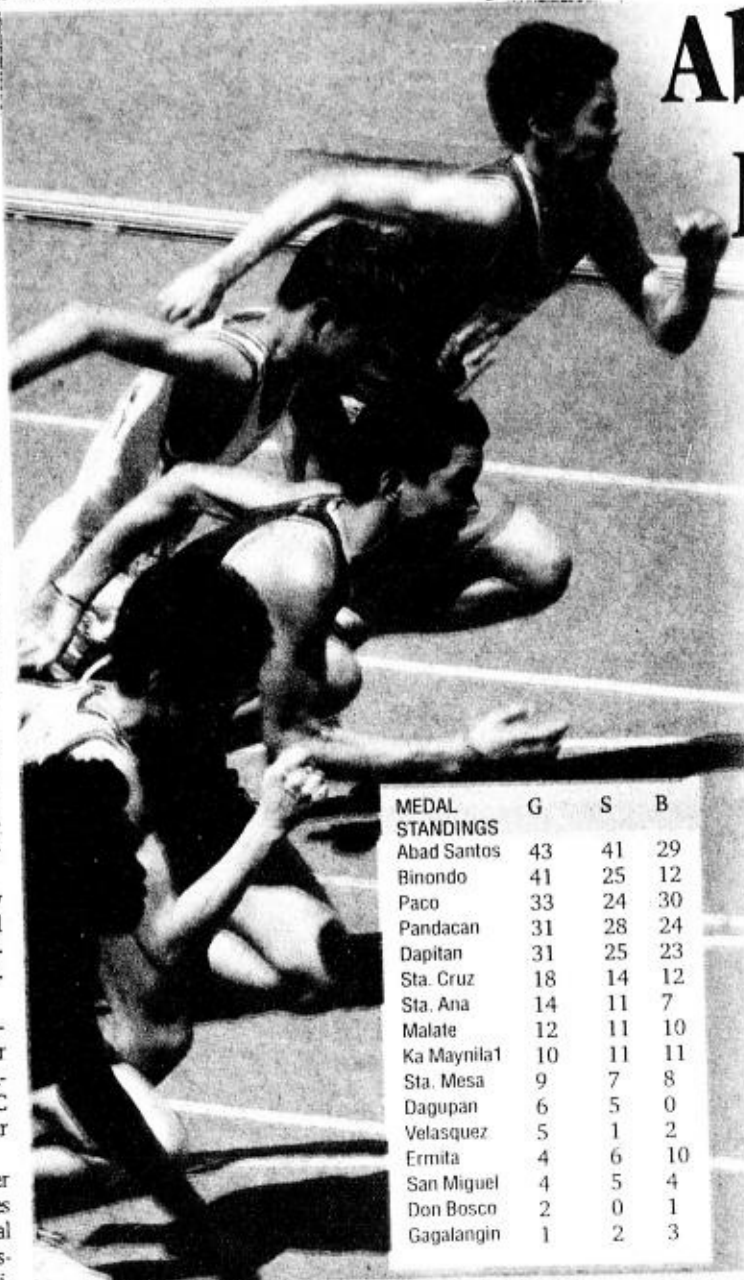
(No less than the world basketball federation (Fiba) had declared the four as major stakeholders in the sport under the Memorandum of Agreement forged between the POC and the Fiba last year. The fifth and only other stakeholder mentioned is the BAP—Ed)

Abundo said that aside from the NCRAA, her federation also includes as affiliates the Colleges Universities Sports Association (CUSA), National Athletic Association of Schools and Universities Association (NAASCU), the State, Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA), the Philippine Schools and Universities Athletic Association (PSCUAA), the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA), and several other student leagues in the country's three major islands.

The SCUAA alone boasts of more than 200 member-schools from all over the country, not to mention the various athletic leagues from Davao, Bicol, Iloilo, Cebu and Bacolod, among others that are also member affiliates of her federation.

"We have the quantity and the quality to prove that we have the majority. We also have to open our eyes to the fact that many of our players and coaches are now in their leagues," said Abundo, citing the names of players Mark Pingris, Yancy and Raniel de Ocampo, Warren Ibañez, Don Alalado, Dino Aldeguer, and coaches Koy Banal, Louie Alas among others as examples.

Abundo added that Pilipinas Basketball's formation signals the emergence of "elitist" basketball, where money has become the prime consideration.



JOSHUA Sacro, third from top, of UST wins the gold in 100m.

Abad Santos grabs MYG overall lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ABAD SANTOS FOUND A GOLD MINE IN track and field with 11 victories mainly through its bets from Barrio Obrero and M. Hizon Elementary School and moved in front on the penultimate day of the 5th Manila Youth Games yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Track Stadium.

Barrio Obrero's youngsters accounted for eight golds while M. Hizon contributed three to give Abad Santos a taste of the leadership with 43 gold medals on top of 41 silvers and 29 bronzes.

Binondo slid to second place with a 41-25-12 gold-silver-bronze count with Paco, Pandacan and Dapitan, whose lofty places in the standings were the handiwork of their swimmers, kept third, fourth and fifth, respectively. Paco had a 33-24-30 medal production, Pandacan 31-28-24 and Dapitan 31-25-23 with the overall championship still up in the air as finals in taekwondo and athletics have yet to be finished.

Delivering the goods for Barrio Obrero were Mark Guerrero in the boys' 7-9 years 25 meter walk, Rosanna Mariano in the girls' 7-9 25-m dash, Joshua Santos in the boys' 7-9 25m dash, Cherry Canlas in the girls' 13-15 75-m dash, Kenneth Terrado in the boys' 10-12 50m dash, Dianne Valles in the girls' 13-15 75m dash and the girls' 13-15 4X50m relay and girls' 7-9 4X50m relay.

The M. Hizon winners were Marisol Ragasa in the girls' 16-20 century dash, Mary Grace Peralta in the girls' 16-20 100m hurdles and its boys' 7-9 4X100 relay team.

Smokey Mountain A grabbed the gold medal in elementary baseball, while Villegas claimed the high school crown at the Rizal

ballpark.

Over at Harrison Plaza, RG. Calderon added two more golds for Abad Santos through chess players Aimee Dumagpi in the girls' 17-under and Kenneth Melwyn Baltazar in the boys' 10-under.

Also bagging chess golds were Junail Mangcol of District 5 in boys' 12-under, Lei Agatha Romero of Diliman Prep in the girls' 12-under, Alvin Gerard Blanco of Jose Abad Santos High in the boys' 15-under, Given Grace Mateo of Ka Maynila 1 in the girls' 15-under and John Maurice delos Santos of Adamson in the boys' 17-under.

In volleyball at San Andres Gym, Ka Maynila 4 captured the girls' 17-under crown, while St. Joseph School took the boys' title. Ka Maynila 3 ruled the boys' 15-under category, Ka Maynila 6 the girls' 15-under, Dr. Albert girls' 12-under and Sta. Ana Elementary School boys' 12-under.

P. Gomez Elementary School in Sta. Cruz amassed four golds in table tennis competitions at RMSC through Jazel May Ingeniero (girls' singles 10-under), Sarahlyn Joel Bravo (girls' singles 15-under), France Geronimo (boys' 10-under) and Donna Mae Catugas and Jazel Ingeniero (mixed doubles 15-under).

Tomas Earnshaw accounted for three table tennis golds through Jasper Kelly Morelos in the boys' singles 12-under, Lyr Leyva and Donna Marie Gamilla in the girls' 12-under doubles and Marjay Balontan and Marlon Rayray in the boys' 12-under doubles.

University of Santo Tomas also cornered three golds in table tennis as Erwin Magalona won in the boys' 15-under singles, John Mark Parola and Magalona in the boys' 15-under doubles and Parola and Ma. Kariza Ylagan in the 15-under mixed doubles.

MEDAL STANDINGS	G	S	B
Abad Santos	43	41	29
Binondo	41	25	12
Paco	33	24	30
Pandacan	31	28	24
Dapitan	31	25	23
Sta. Cruz	18	14	12
Sta. Ana	14	11	7
Malate	12	11	10
Ka Maynila 1	10	11	11
Sta. Mesa	9	7	8
Dagupan	6	5	0
Velasquez	5	1	2
Ermita	4	6	10
San Miguel	4	5	4
Don Bosco	2	0	1
Gagalangin	1	2	3

POC meeting with Fiba not a priority—Peping

THE MEETING WITH TOP world basketball federation (Fiba) officials early this week in South Korea was not the priority of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

The five-man delegation headed by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco flew to Seoul primarily to attend the 15th general assembly meeting of the Association of National Olympic Committee (Anoc) where the Philippines is one of 203 member countries.

A meeting of the International

Olympic Committee executive council was also held, providing Cojuangco, POC first vice president Monico Puentevela, secretary general Steve Hontiveros and legal counsel Ding Tanjuatco a chance of getting a rare audience with IOC president Jacques Rogge.

"Because everybody was around, we thought it was an opportunity for us to also meet the Fiba leadership," said Cojuangco yesterday as he denied a report (not in the Inquirer) that the world cage body had rejected the constitution and by-laws of Pilipinas Basketball,

which POC is endorsing as replacement for the expelled Basketball Association of the Philippines.

"No outright decision was expected. What we wanted was for Fiba to tell us what to do to hasten the lifting of our suspension," added Cojuangco of the Tuesday meeting with Fiba sec-gen Patrick Baumann, who later conferred with six representatives from the four major stakeholders.

Borislav Stankovic, the man Baumann succeeded as Fiba sec-gen, was in the meeting with Cojuangco. With Baumann when he

met the representatives of the four stakeholders headed by PBA commissioner Noli Eala was incoming Fiba president Bob Elphinstone of Australia.

Baumann told the POC group that the quickest way to lifting the suspension is for BAP president Joey Lina to sign, as the fifth stakeholder, the constitution and by-laws of the new cage body crafted by the four other stakeholders.

Baumann, in the second meeting, said another way is for the BAP to lose its authority and status to

serve as governing body for the sport. He said Eala and Co. should "stay the course" and be persistent in their drive to replace BAP as the new cage authority in the country.

Cojuangco said Lina can save himself the trouble of even breaking his knuckles knocking at the POC door so the BAP can be readmitted. "I urge him to be patriotic for once by signing (the constitution and by-laws of Pilipinas Basketball)," said Cojuangco, adding that reinstatement is not mandatory to the lifting of the Fiba suspension anyway. **Ernesto A. Gonzales**

For once Joey, be a hero

LET ME CLARIFY MATTERS AMID SOME claims the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and Eala & Company failed in their alleged bid to ask the World Basketball Federation (Fiba) to lift the suspension of Philippine basketball from the world basketball body.

You got it all wrong, fellas. I should know. I was there.

There was no failure to speak of in the first place. Neither was there a rejection of the statutes of Pilipinas Basketball, which was sent to Fiba's headquarters in Geneva weeks before the April 4 meeting in Seoul between Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann and the two Philippine panels that met Baumann on two separate occasions.

The first group that met Baumann, Fiba sec-gen emeritus Boris Stankovic and outgoing Fiba president Dr. Carl Ching Men-ky was headed by POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. With Peping in the nighttime meeting were POC first vice president Monico Puentevela, secretary general Steve Hontiveros and legal counsel Ding Tanjuatco.

It should be worth noting here that Peping, being the incumbent POC president, was in Seoul primarily for the Anoc (Association of National Olympic Committees) convention that drew 203 Olympic committee presidents from 203 countries. (See related story on this.)

Peping used the occasion to seek an audience with Baumann, who was himself attending another convention called the International Sports Federations (ISF) summit at the Intercontinental Hotel. Fiba is an ISF member. The Anoc convention was held at COEX Grand Hotel where Peping, Puentevela, Hontiveros and Tanjuatco were billeted.

Aside from the meeting with Baumann, Peping's POC delegation had also met with Dr. Jacques Rogge, the Belgian president of the International Olympic Committee. The historic encounter with Dr. Rogge was arranged by Frank Elizalde, the IOC representative to the Philippines. It was in this meeting that Dr. Rogge assured Peping of his "all-out support" for the Philippine bid to lift its suspension from Fiba.

In the meeting with Baumann, it was Puentevela who virtually pressed Baumann to "tell us what to do to lift the suspension."

Baumann said: "The fastest way for you to achieve that is to make Mr. Joey Lina sign the statutes (of Pilipinas Basketball)."

That was what happened, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Now as to the nighttime meeting between Baumann and Noli Eala & Co., the Fiba sec-gen told Eala three times, "Stay the course."

"What Mr. Baumann meant, of course, was for us to continue with what we have started—that is, consolidate basketball forces in the country—as he gave us the impression we are on the right track in our mission to regain our active status at Fiba," said Eala. "We knew we would not immedi-

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



ately get the nod of Fiba when we left Manila for Seoul. We went to Seoul to open doors, to finally establish formal links with Fiba through Mr. Baumann. We felt we have achieved that mission."

To show his sincerity to Baumann, Eala invited the Fiba sec-gen to be the guest of honor when the next PBA season opens on Oct. 1. Baumann had acceded to it.

With Eala's group were his fellow basketball stakeholders Commissioner Chino Trinidad of PBL, Jun Jun Capistrano of UAAP and Paul Supan of NCAA, and PBA Chair Ely Capacio and Vice Chair Ricky Vargas.

To recap, the twin meetings with Baumann produced two salient points, courtesy of Baumann himself:

First, Baumann said to Peping: "Have Mr. Lina sign the statutes of Pilipinas Basketball and it's all over." Baumann cited the provision of the Memorandum of Understanding between Fiba and POC calling for all five—PBA, PBL, UAAP, NCAA and BAP—to sign the by-laws of a new basketball body. No Lina signature, no Fiba OK.

Second, Baumann said to Eala: "Stay the course." This is the longer route to regain Fiba recognition and it may sideswipe our participation in the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in December.

In short, the Joey Lina signature is the shortcut to ending our basketball agony.

Is that too much to ask, too hard to do, Pareng Joey? For once, be a hero to your country. The situation calls for it.

C'mon, compadre, end our basketball suffering now. It won't take 10 seconds to sign your name. The Comelec won't even come in to verify your signature.

BASTBREAK. My condolences go to the loved ones of Gilbert Reyes, whose remains lie at Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati. An avid golfer and a consummate team player, the deceased is survived by his wife Evelyn, children Chot (the national basketball coach), Jun, Billy, Len, Mike and Gel. Masses at 8 p.m. on April 10 and 6 p.m. on April 11 have been set. I also condole with my fellow sportswriter Jun "Lomi" Lomibao, whose father, Lorenzo Sr., had passed away. The body of Lomi's father, who had also left behind wife Isidora and children Rosalinda and Belinda, lies at the Mt. Sinai Funeral Homes on Arellano St., Dagupan City. Interment is on April 11.

Comments to menju@pltdsl.com

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Pineda-Martinez tandem captures Sta. Elena Cup

JESUS PINEDA JR. AND ENZO MARTINEZ combined for a two-day aggregate of 165 points to capture the overall title in the 10th edition of the Sta. Elena Cup, the member-guest tournament of the Sta. Elena Golf Club held recently in Cabuyao, Laguna.

Bucking the lightning-fast greens, Pineda made 38 and 42 for two days while guest partner Martinez did even better with 42 and 43 as they

wound up six strokes clear of the second best team in the full-packed field of 226.

Kevin Tayao and Raymond Sangil proved too solid a combination in the battle for the low gross award of the tourney which had Omega, Mizuno, Royal Caribbean, The Golf Shop of Baron Travel, Sta. Elena Properties, Pepsi, Aviva and Intellicare as major sponsors. Hole-in-one sponsors were Toyota Motor Philip-

pines Inc., Prestige Cars Pasong Tamo, Mazda Greenhills, Kart Plaza Manufacturing and Club Car.

Tayao submitted 36-37 while Sangil scored 37-34 for a 144 equivalent to even par in medal play which allowed them to successfully defend their title with plenty to spare.

Bryan Cockrell and Augusto de Jesus topped Class A, Bobon Topacio and Ewin Gumila prevailed in Class

B, Bobby Rosales and Roland Garcia triumphed in Class C to complete the winners circle.

Though nobody went home with the BMW 3-Series, a Toyota Camry, a Mazda 3 and a Yamaha golf cart that were staked as hole-in-one prizes, a number of participants won major raffle items like an Omega Constellation watches, an Alaskan cruise for two inclusive of airfare, golf equipment and the cash raffle worth

P500,000 and P300,000.

Part of the proceeds of the raffle also went to the Caddies Fund that will subsidize the medical and accident insurance of the club's bag-toters.

Club officials led by Edward Tiu and Rico Tantoco handed out the prizes to this year's winners in a fun-filled evening that capped an exciting four days of competition at the multi-awarded course.

Cockrell made up for a measly 29

in his first round with a 40 the next day that supported the 42-45 effort of De Jesus for a 156 total, beating the pair of Therese Dabao-JP Reyes by one.

Topacio-Gumila ended up tied with Lucille Carlos and Farah Imperial at 156 but prevailed in the count-back with more net birdies. Rosales and Garcia, which had the second best total of 159, beat Allen Macasae and Alex Revilla by two.

Caddies' champ leads Calatagan Open by 2

Storyland Junior Badminton Camp set April 22-23 at SM

CHILDREN ENJOYING THEIR SUMMER VACATION will be given the chance to discover the sport of badminton in SM Storyland's Junior Badminton Camp.

The SM Storyland Junior Badminton Camp is a two-phase event consisting of a clinic and competitions in various Storyland branches.

Open to all SM Storyland Clubbies from ages 5 years old to 12, the clinics to be handled by top badminton coaches will be held on April 22-23 at SM Southmall and April 29-30 at SM Fairview.

Selected graduates of the clinics will then see

action in two separate weekend competitions, the first on May 6-7 at SM Southmall and the second at SM Fairview on May 13-14.

Registration is under way at the SM Storyland Club offices at SM Southmall and SM Fairview on a first-come, first-served basis.

The SM Storyland Junior Badminton Camp is being held in partnership with INQUIRER Badminton and sponsored by Kimoni and Gerflor Taraflex as the official mat sponsor.

Trophies and lots of exciting prizes are up for grabs.

By Musong R. Castillo

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS—JESSIE BALASABAS SHOT A 2-UNDER-PAR 70 in ultra humid conditions yesterday for a two stroke lead after 18 holes of the third Calatagan Amateur Open presented by the Bank of Commerce here.

The 23-year-old from Zamboanga, the winner of the second National Caddies' Open in February, turned in a 36-34 card built around three of his five birdies coming home to pace fellow NCO program mainstay Rufino Bayron by two.

Rufino signed for a 37-35 even as Jonel Ababa and Philippine pool member Jay Bayron tied for third after submitting 73s, one ahead of defending champion Joseph Labajo and teener Paul Echavez.

The 6,799-yard layout bedeviled the small championship division field as pins were placed in tight spots and the winds swirled all day long.

One of the biggest casualties was former RP amateur champion and DHL Open winner Jun Bernis, who never got going, submitted a 78 and found himself eight shots behind with 18 holes left in one of the country's toughest club championships.

Canlubang standout Abe Rosal tied for seventh spot with 16-year-old former Apo Golf caddy Zannie Boy Gialon after a 76, one better than three-time PAL Inter-

club individual senior champion Tommy Manotoc.

Balasabas, who tied for 18th spot in the DHL Amateur Open at Canlubang two weeks ago, started hot, narrowly missing an eagle chip on the par-5 opening hole. He also birdied No. 3 only to fall back to even par after 11 holes.

But he played his last seven holes at two-under thanks to birdies on 12 and 13 and a chip that found the hole on the 17th.

"The course played so tough today," Balasabas told the INQUIRER in Filipino. "There were many holes where you can drop shots easily. It was a matter of playing with caution."

Meanwhile, Domeng Molinar and Arnold Jumalon tied for the Class A lead after firing 82s. Bing Bunye was in solo second after an 83 with Raul Jorge and Tibs Carandang sharing fourth with 85s.

Conrad Caubalejo took a three-stroke lead in Class B after shooting an impressive 81. Henry Medina, Frank Juane and Las Piñas Vice Mayor Louie Bustamante had 84s for second place.



JESSE Balasabas gives Rufino Bayron a piggy-back ride after his NCO victory at Wack Wack.

Guy, Monsalves top jungolf winners at Camp John Hay

ALLAN GUY TOPPED CLASS A UNCHALLENGED as blowout victories marked the second leg of the Samsung Jungolf Tour's summer circuit and the final eliminations stop of the DHL-WWW national age-group championships at the Camp John Hay course.

Guy tallied rounds of 75, 79 and 76 for a 230 aggregate that was 24 strokes better than Selwyn Poblete's 254 in their division for 15-17 years old.

Still, Poblete joined Guy and the other top two finishers in the other divisions in advancing to the grand finals of the DHL-WWW national age-group staged by the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines in coordination with the National Golf Association of the Philippines on May 9-11 at Villamor.

Also clinching slots were James Chun, RG Medestomas, Mara Monsalve and Maureen Paredes in Class B, James Ricohermoso, Gus Pacheco, Marvi Monsalve and Ann Sabater in Class C, Gerard Mactal, Marco Ludovice, Min Ji Kim and Leonie Tinio in Class D and Rupert Zaragosa and Ivan Monsalve in Class E and Ryan Monsalve in Class F.

Samsung and Philippine Airlines are the main sponsors of the Jungolf summer circuit held in coordination with the Federation of Golf Clubs in the Philippines. The other sponsors are Callaway, Titleist, Mizuno, La Jolla, Taylor Made, Wilson, Ping, Auto Magic, Unilever, MC-CI Air Liquid, INQUIRER Golf and Michael Guy.

Chun (206) beat

Medestomas (230) in the boys division while Mara Monsalve (285) won over Paredes (346) in the girls side while Ricohermoso (250) finished far ahead of Pacheco (283) and Marvi Monsalve (263) wound up 11 strokes better than Sabater.

It was Mactal (312) who fashioned the closest win when he rallied from four shots down to beat Ludovice in Class D where Kim (288) easily won over Tinio (326).

Zaragosa (211) went unchallenged by Ivan Monsalve (246) while the youngest of the Monsalve brood, Ryan (265), was the lone entry in his division.

Focus shifts to the two-week Callaway Junior World qualifying starting on April 18 at the Sherwood Hills Golf Club in Trece Martires, Cavite.

National Caddies' Open long-term program starts

CALATAGAN, BATANGAS—The long-term program of the National Caddies' Open for its second batch of beneficiaries officially started with the help from the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) and food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

Led by second year champion Jessie Balasabas, and second placer Mark Fernando, the NCO program took a total of five new faces into its fold, all of whom will be trained not only in the sport but in personality development as well.

"We are very grateful to our backers who believe that we can arrive at something with this program," said NCO co-chair and sportsman Hermie Esguerra. "Their support is vital to the overall success of this program."

The NCO program has started funding Balasabas, Fernando and

Rufino Bayron while housing them here and training them under the watchful eyes of noted coach Jun Cedo.

Being able to produce a member of the Philippine team in the future is the organization's ultimate goal and Esguerra believes that they are threading the right path.

Last year, Mario Labajo, third placer to Jonel Ababa in the inaugural staging, went as far as the semifinals of the RP Amateur in Bacolod.

Together with younger brother Joseph, Ababa, Fernando and Balasabas, Mario helped Nike to a sweep of the Fil-Am in Baguio last December before powering Canlubang to a similar double in the men's regular division. The program is being run by the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation chaired by Tommy Manotoc.

Anne's Pride prevails

ANNE'S PRIDE rode on two collegiate league players to drub Team Atletas, 95-63, and win Division G title of the Metro Basketball inter-commercial tournament recently.

Jodee Valencia of Jose Rizal University topscored with 25 points while Letran's Harold Sta. Cruz had 15 points, 17 rebounds and six blocks in the open senior game played at the Blue Mirage Metro Gym on Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City.





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Stage 1: Club Qualifying Tournament

April 1 & 5	Ati, Malasag Golf & Country Club, Uyo, Batangas	April 6	Forest Hills Golf & Country Club, Inc. Antipolo City	April 8 & 9	Valley Golf & Country Club, Cainta, Rizal
April 1 & 2	Orchard Golf & Country Club, Basmansan, Cavite	April 7	Manila Southwoods Golf & Country Club, Carmona, Cavite	April 8	Wack-Wack Golf & Country Club, Mandaluyong
April 1 & 3	Inglis Golf & Country Club, Tagaytay			April 9	Manila Golf & Country Club, Forbes Park
April 2	Eastridge Golf Club, Inc. Binangonan, Rizal	April 8 & 9	Camp John Hay Golf Club, Baguio	April 22	Eagle Ridge Golf & Country Club, Gen. Trias, Cavite
April 4 & 9	Sta. Elena Golf Club, Sta. Elena, Laguna	April 9	Halo Golf & Country Club, Halo	April 22	Canlubang Golf & Country Club, Canlubang, Laguna
April 5	Negros Occidental Golf & Country Club				

Stage 2: Satellite Elimination in each district

(Luzon, North, South, East, West, and Visayas/Mindanao)

Stage 3: Grand Finals

1-2 Japan finish in Asian aquathlon; Macasieb 7th

By Jasmine W. Payo

MEXICO, PAMPANGA—KODO HIRAMATSU of Japan led most of the way to bag his second straight title in the 4th Asian Aquathlon Championship yesterday at The Lakeshore here in Mexico, Pampanga.

The 25-year-old Hiramatsu, who flew in from Tokyo a day before the competition, was hardly challenged, breasting the tape with a time of 34 minutes and 13 seconds at the end of the 2.5K run-1K swim-2.5K run event.

Kenta Ando made it a 1-2 finish

for Japan, coming in nine seconds behind Hiramatsu.

"Many of our rivals were very strong, but our advantage was in running," said Hiramatsu, who ruled the third edition last year in Thailand. "Hong Kong was very good in swimming, but not in running."

Hong Kong bets claimed the next two spots, with Samuel Leung Ching Yin ranking third in 35:09 followed by Chan Ye Ko Ricco in 35:20.

Top Philippine bet Arland Macasieb could only muster a seventh-place finish, more than two minutes behind the Japanese leaders in 36:27.

"The international field was very strong," said Macasieb, a bronze medalist in the triathlon of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games. "I definitely think I could have done better. I was aiming for the top five."

The Philippines ranked better in the under-23 division with Lea Coline Langit finishing second overall in 40:05.

Tania Mak So Ning, a 19-year-old psychology student from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, clinched her first championship in 37:50, nearly three minutes ahead of Langit.

"I was running fourth but I was

able to catch up in the swim event," said Langit, a 19-year-old Sports Studies major at De La Salle University.

Mak So Ning also ruled the women's division of the race that saw 62 participants from five countries.

Hong Kong bet Vincel Hui Wai Su finished second in the women's division in 38:53, just less than a minute in front of third-placer Song-Nan Lee of Korea, who clocked 39:20.

The Philippines expects a stronger finish in the 6th Asian Duathlon Championship today at the Clark Expo grounds in Clark Field, Pampanga.



TAKING THE PLUNGE

Inge Dekker of Netherlands dives during the women's 100m butterfly heats of the 8th FINA World Short Course Swimming Championships in Shanghai. Dekker finished second fastest. AFP

N. Cotabato spoils Pangasinan's NBC tournament home debut

URDANETA—NORTH COTABATO spoiled Pangasinan's home debut Friday night by thwarting the Hundred Islands cagers, 85-82, in the 2006 Guerrero Brandy-NBC national basketball championship at the Sports Center here.

With Edu Allado tightly guarded by the Pangasinenses, Rey Bifas stepped up to lead the Braves of Gov. Manny Pifol and Mayor Efrén Pifol to their fourth win in six games.

Earlier, Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Iligan crusaders completed a sweep of their northern swing by dealing NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's Spring Cooking Oil-Paranaque its first loss in three games, 73-64.

Marlon Kalaw led all scorers with 16 points as the Firefly Lightings-backed Crusaders raised their record to 4-1.

GAME TODAY
(C.P. Tinga Gym, Taguig)
6 p.m.—Laguna vs Forward Taguig

With Hundred Islands still ahead, 75-69, at the 6:04 mark of the fourth quarter, Bifas scored six straight points and Jun Tamayo knocked in back-to-back baskets to push the Braves ahead, 79-75, time down to 4:17.

The Braves were ahead 85-82 when Jovy Sese missed a side jumper with 4.3 ticks left. Elvis Tolentino grabbed the rebound left,

but his pass to a teammate at the 3-point area was intercepted by Bifas.

Action shifts to the C.P. Tinga gym in Taguig City today with Gov. Terecita "Ningning" Lazaro's Laguna Pistons facing Mayor Freddie Tinga's Forward Taguig cagers at 6 p.m.

The nationwide tourney is sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

Laylo stays clean, hurdles Milagrosa

NATIONAL MASTER DARWIN Laylo beat fellow NM Alex Milagrosa in 45 moves of a Center Counter Game to score his fourth straight win and grab the solo lead in the fourth round of the 2006 National Chess Championship Finals Saturday at the Market Place Shopping Mall in Mandaluyong City.

Laylo, a former stand-out of San Sebastian College, remained the only unbeaten player in the tournament serving as qualifier for the Philippine team to the Chess Olympiad set in Turin, Italy, next month.

Fide Master Oliver Dimakiling, on the other hand, stopped the winning ways of "giant killer" Allan Macala after 34 moves of a London System Opening.

With the win, Dimakiling who hails from Davao City, improved to 3.5 points in the company of IM Barlo Nadera, FM Wesley So, NM John Paul Gomez, NM Nouri Hamed, NM Roderick Nava, Rus-

tom Tolentino, Ali Branzuela, and Ruzzel Lagman.

NM Hamed, the tormentor of GM Buenaventura "Bong" Villamayor in the third round, halved the point with IM Nadera in 40 moves of Queens Pawn Game.

Branzuela and Lagman, two unrated player beat veteran Olympians NM Emmanuel Senador (56 English) and IM Petronio Roca (51 Slav), respectively.

Other matches saw, two-time RP junior champion Gomez nip Paragames four-gold winner Henry Lopez in 51 moves of another English Duel and Nava and Tolentino split the point.

In the distaff side, five-time national women's champion WIM Cristine Rose Mariano beat WNM Loreshyl Cuizon in 33 moves of Reti Opening to share the lead with WNM Sherella Cua, WNM Catherine Perena and Chardine Cheradee Camacho. They have 3.5 points apiece. **NM Marlon Bernardino**



LUIS Castillo (1) of the Minnesota Twins throws to first base to complete a double play as Ben Broussard (23) of the Cleveland Indians is forced out at Jacobs Field in Cleveland, Ohio. AFP

Regional coordinators say message misused

TWO REGIONAL COORDINATORS, Wilfredo Neri of Bacolod City and Ronnie Tabudlong of Davao City, said their message to the National Chess Federation of the Philippines has been misused by former NCFP secretary general lawyer Samuel Estimo.

They clarified that they are merely requesting, not demanding, for more chances to organize and officiate tournaments in their regions.

"We do not wish to be part of any political infighting," said Neri, reacting to a story which appeared in a tabloid on Friday. "We are eager to learn under supervision of the NCFP. Willy Abalos supported our call for a

meeting last February for the development of chess in our region."

Visayas and Mindanao chess coordinators had met last Feb. 23 in Cagayan de Oro City together with Rudi Suaco of Pampanga, Jun Quizon and Lynde Salgado of Cagayan de Oro, Jack Dasmariñas and Willie Maghanoy of Iligan City.

Abalos, the NCFP tournament director, said that Estimo should have brought up the issue to the board and not to the media.

"NCFP president Prospero Pichay has instructed that such matters should be taken up in the NCFP Board and not by press releases," Abalos said.

Badminton clinic up

BADMINTON ENTHUSIASTS, ages 5 to 65 years, will have a chance to learn the proper fundamentals of the fastest-growing game in the country from experts when the 2006 Burlington-Summer Badminton Clinic opens its sessions starting on April 17 in five areas.

The event is part of the "Sporty Summer" program of Burlington, the socks authority, which also includes the Batang PBA basketball clinic and tournament and the PBA Basketball Shootout at SM Malls.

This was announced by Ruddy

Tan, general manager of Burlington Industries Phils. Inc., maker of Burlington Shocks XT and Burlington Bio-Fresh anti-microbial socks.

The badminton clinic will have separate modules for different levels at the Badminton Central Makati (890-5254); Quezon City Sports Club (443-8494) and Olympic Badminton Club (632-7356); Manila-Peregrine Badminton Center (488-2968); and Lipa-Badminton Courts (043-9812525). Registration fee is P2,500 for ten sessions. Contact Ryan or Nancy at 892-7113.

Soronda, Yusikee bag JVC reg'l plums

CEBU CITY—Karl Soronda and Yugean Yusikee swept their respective rivals to capture the men's and ladies singles plums in the elite division of the JVC Regional Badminton Championships at the Holiday Spa and Badminton Courts Friday here. Soronda, who bested Jiffy Cabardo in the quarters then retired an injured defending champion Spyro Mijares in the semis, beat Adrian Ardiza, 21-18, 21-4. Yusikee, on the other hand, shocked last year's champion Hazel Peroy, 21-14, 12-11. They each won P5,000, JVC items, Victor rackets and Pioneer Plan Personal Accident GCs and earned berths to the JVC Open Badminton Championships slated June-July at the Giorietta in Makati City. Soronda and Yusikee later teamed up to beat Jonathan Olofermes and Peroy and win the mixed doubles crown.

Heritage Cup Grand Championship set

WHO WILL be the overall champion in the Philippine Heritage Cup derby series? The answer will be known on April 25 with the staging of the grand championship 5-bullstag derby at the Phila Coliseum. The event will be participated in by more than 80 qualifiers. Co-champions in the third leg last April 4 and 6 were Nelson Uy, Butch Yabut and Ding Capi. Ruel Medina and Osang dela Cruz and Bobby del Rosario. Meanwhile, the LGBA Bakbakan eliminations (4-bullstag) follows on April 27 also at Araneta. Only 4-bakbakan-banded bullstags are accepted. For inquiries, call 926-7808, 924-5072 or 0920-5851940 (Taz Lunasco).

SJC 3-cocker submission of weights

TODAY is the deadline for submission of all entries in connection with San Juan Coliseum's UBBA Summer 3-cock derby. Entries will be accepted from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. To be hosted by the United Backyard Breeders Association, hostilities start at 4 p.m. tomorrow with over 75 fights on tap. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. UBBA is a group of 50 upcoming backyard breeders and each member has 100 or less fighters. Among the group's officers are Ronnie Lacina, lawyer Jojo Sablan, Abet Lucido and Ben Nadurata. For info, call 725-6563, 725-5369 and 0917-8041691 (Arlie).

Local player deals Paraguay lone loss

BAGUIO CITY—FORMER University of Baguio top player Danilo De Luna inflicted the only loss of Grandmaster Mark Paragua in a simultaneous exhibition at the Baguio Country Club late Friday here. The 22-year-old Paragua also scored 24 wins and 9 draws in the 34-board exhibition.

De Luna, acknowledged as the city's top player, prevailed using the black pieces after 50 moves of a Sicilian Defense.

Sharing the limelight with De Luna were Suod Mamailao, Wilbur Suanding, Geron and Jeffrey Bas-Ong Julio Busaing, Luigi James Laking, Danny Lagasca, Larry Padawan and 12-year-old



PARAGUA

Haridas Pascua of Mangatarem, Pangasinan, who salvaged a draw with GM Paragua.

Former Benguet governor and NCFP director Raul "Rocky" Molintas organized Paragua's exhibition before the 1st Cordillera U-18 Age Group Chess got underway yesterday. He is being supported by younger brother and Baguio City councilor Joe Molintas.

In the tournament proper, top seed Nelson Mariano III of Manila beat Patrick Dulay of La Union to take the early lead at the Cordillera Chess Center at Aspulan Restaurant in La Trinidad. **Marlon Bernardino**

Philracom Imported Stakes Series set

SIX CLASSY IMPORTS LED BY RECENT controversial winner Golden Link (AUS) headline the field of challengers for the first leg of the 2006 Philracom Imported Stakes Series set to flag off tomorrow at the Santa Ana Park.

The P600,000.00 Group 3 event marks the start of the six leg 2006 Imported Stakes Series to be disputed over 1,450 meters. Golden Link (Aus), a 4-year-old mare by Victory

Note (USA) out of Fized Verse (Aus), sets out to prove that her recent victory over 2005 champion import Wild Orchid (AUS) was no fluke as she aims to score her first major stakes victory. Top jockey Jonathan Hernandez will ride Golden Link for the partnership of owners Jun Almeida, Noli Umali and John Arceo. Looming as Golden Link's strongest challenger for the top spot is recent Santa Ana Park Sunday Classic win-

ner Slatkis (Aus), a 5-year-old race mare by Desert King (IRE) out of Crisp (AUS), owned by Deemark International Trading, Inc. and set to be ridden by John Alvin Guee.

Also joining the hunt for the P360,000.00 guaranteed winner's purse are Batangas City Mayor Eddie Dimacuha's Ever Mine Now (AUS), Sandy Javier's Michale De Dragon (AUS), Shipshape Ferry's Pine Needles (NZ) and Hermie Esguerra's

Suppressed (Aus).

The winner gets a guaranteed prize of P300,000.

Last year's winner of the Philracom 1st leg Imported Stakes Series was unheralded Sir Golden Score.

Succeeding legs are scheduled for May 7 (PRCI), June 11 (MJCI), July 23 (MJCI), Aug. 20 (MJCI) and Oct. 22 (PRCI), with the Philracom All Imported Championship set for Nov. 19 at the Santa Ana Park.

Race 1—(Q1/T1)—Going Strike (1), My Lady Hannah (8), Sincerity (2), Luvina (3)
Race 2—(Q1/T1)—Queen Becca (6), Hiss A (4), Bang (5), Magic Dancer (1), Forward (2)
Race 3—(Q1/T1)—West N Wild (6), Estelle (1), Gaby's Charm (1), Awesome Power (7)
Race 4—(Pena/Q1/T1)—Tiger Lewis (12), Supriya (1), Terry Toon (7), Shadow Quail (8), Black Peacock/Golden Mystique (2)
Race 5—(Q1/T1)—Golden Touch (1), Chiclet (2), Gold Money (3), Pay to Cash (7)
Race 6—(Q1/T1)—Hireless (8), Mar-



BY TOP CHOICE

que (3), Big Dots (4), Lord Of All (4)
Race 7—(Q1/T1)—Golden Link (2), Suppressed (8), Pine Needles (5), Status (1)
Race 8—(Q1/T1)—Vassity (4), Sue-line (5), Crystal City (1), Better Stride (2)
Race 9—(Q1/T1)—Leave No Doubt

(5), I Love This Game (8), Early Gray (1), Surprise Target (2)
Race 10—(Pena/Q1/T1)—Speed Bulld (1), Sahols (1), Five O'Clock (4), Gerstene (8), Native Prince (3)
Race 11—(Q1/T1)—Golden Consistent (6), Ther Samba (2), King Anthony (4), Sharp Cowboy (3)
Race 12—(Pena/Q1/T1)—Cat Prince (8), Karma (1), Flame Slays (5), Maggaskarman (9), Hakura Matsui (7)
Race 13—(Q1/T1)—Dynamic Jazz (8), Moon Dance (7), Vulture (10), Lulu Mac (5), Look Of Love (5), Hunt Of Jaxxon (1)

DRAG RACERS: Quartermile Drag Race winners with Mike Reyes and Bebot Reyes of Roadwise Motoring Foundation, from left: TJ Pangilian (Sportsman champion); Christian Ramirez (PRO champ); Mike dela Cruz (PRO runner-up); Andrew Manio (Sportsman runner-up); Dennis Ison (Hotstreet runner-up); Antares Francisco (Hotstreet champ); Joseph Corbillion (Quick 8 Runner-up). The next leg is set April 29 at the Omni Aviation in Clark.



Australia gains Davis Cup semis; US ties Chile

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—WAYNE Arthurs and Paul Hanley defeated Max Mirnyi and Vladimir Voltchkov of Belarus 3-6, 6-4, 5-7, 6-3, 7-5 in doubles Saturday to give Australia a winning 3-0 lead in its Davis Cup quarterfinal.

Australia will now play the winner of the other quarterfinal this weekend between Argentina and defending champions Croatia in September's semifinals.

If Croatia wins the quarterfinal, the semifinal will be played in Australia. If Argentina wins, it will host the semi

against Australia.

At 5-5 in the deciding set Saturday, Arthurs and Hanley broke Voltchkov's serve, taking the game when Arthurs' forehand went between the two Belarus players on the baseline.

With Hanley serving for the match, the Australians needed three match points, finally winning when Mirnyi's return of serve went long on the Rebound Ace surface at Kooyong.

On Friday, Davis Cup rookie Chris Guccione and Lleyton Hewitt gave Aus-

tralia a 2-0 lead.

Guccione beat Belarus No. 1 Mirnyi in nearly four hours, winning the marathon five-setter 7-6 (4), 3-6, 7-5, 3-6, 6-4.

Hewitt, playing for the first time at Kooyong, the former home of the Australian Open, easily beat Voltchkov 6-2, 6-1, 6-2.

In the now meaningless reverse singles on Sunday, Hewitt is scheduled to take on Mirnyi while Voltchkov will play Guccione, although it is likely other players will be substituted.

Meanwhile, at Rancho Mirage Califor-

nia, Andy Roddick beat Nicolas Massu in straight sets to even the United States' Davis Cup quarterfinal against Chile at 1-1.

Roddick beat Massu 6-3, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5) to square the best-of-five competition after Chile's Fernando Gonzalez outlasted James Blake 6-7 (5), 0-6, 7-6 (2), 10-8 in a 4-hour, 20-minute marathon opening match.

Massu and Gonzalez, the 2004 Olympic doubles champions, are slated to team against twins Bob and Mike Bryan in Saturday's lone match. AP



RODDICK jumps and spins in the air.

REUTERS

Michael, Monty lead casualties at US Masters

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA—US OPEN CHAMPION Michael Campbell and eight-times European No. 1 Colin Montgomerie were among the high-profile casualties of the US Masters cut-off on Friday.

New Zealander Campbell and Briton Montgomerie finished one stroke adrift when the halfway cut fell at four-over-par 148 with 47 players staying in the tournament.

Also going out were world number eight David Toms, 2004 British Open champion Todd Hamilton and fellow American Chris DiMarco, who was beaten by Tiger Woods in a playoff for last year's Masters title.

Toms, the 2001 US PGA champion, Hamilton and DiMarco fell three shots short.

Sweden's Henrik Stenson, who lies second in the 2006 European Tour order of merit, was another casualty on his debut at Augusta National. The Swede returned a 36-hole total of seven-over 151.

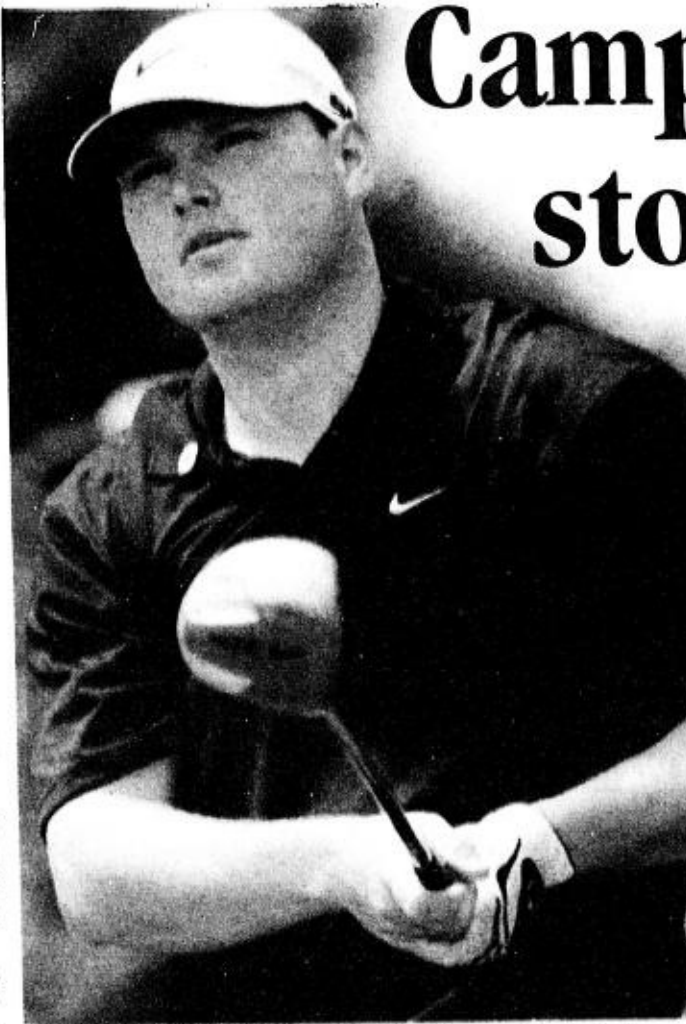
Montgomerie, whose best Masters finish in 14 starts was a tie for eighth in 1998, rued poor putting on the slick and heavily contoured greens.

"I never really putt well here," the 42-year-old Scot told reporters. "I made three birdies in two days, two tap-ins yesterday and a 10-footer today."

"That's not enough. You have to make more birdies than that and it means you have to hole a putt. I don't hole enough putts."

"It was difficult," he added, referring to gusting winds of the second round. "You need a bit of fortune here and I had no fortune at all."

Italian amateur Edoardo Molinari, another to make an early exit from year's first major, was in jubilant mood. Reuters



CAMPBELL: Three straight birdies from the 12th propel him to the top. AP

Campbell rings bell, storms ahead by 3

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA—IT'S DIFFICULT TO recognize this place as Augusta National.

Azaleas are bursting with pink, white and purple blooms. The wind swirls down at Amen Corner, turning good shots into bogeys or worse, and Rae's Creek is as scary as ever.

Everything else about this Masters, however, is starting to resemble the US Open.

Chad Campbell kept his mistakes to a minimum in Friday's second round, turning three straight birdies into a 5-under 67 and taking a three-shot lead over Vijay Singh, Fred Couples and Rocco Mediate.

"I don't think there's anything to celebrate yet," said Campbell, who was at 6-under 138.

"I haven't really accomplished much yet. We're only halfway through."

Campbell's birdie run through the back nine was about the only thing resembling a charge that typically defines this major. Everyone else was hanging on, happy with par, trying to survive what is shaping up as the toughest test in golf.

Just like so many US Opens, the goal was to

keep the ball in play off the tee and go from there.

"You play away from flags here like you do at US Opens," Ernie Els, who has won the Open twice, said after his second straight 71.

"The only difference is the rough is not as high. Give that some time."

And as Els looked ahead to a weekend in which 15 players were within five shots of the lead—including defending champion Tiger Woods—he expected something else that reminds him of that other major held in June.

For now, much depends on Campbell.

He is a khakis-and-a-white-shirt player in an arena of dogwoods and magnolias, a prototype US Open golfer who digs shots out of the dirt. The firm, crusty conditions over two days has shortened this beefy course and helped medium-length hitters like Campbell, who once described his driving distance in relation to a steak—medium, left on the grill two extra minutes.

Campbell began his surge at Amen Corner, holing a 20-foot birdie putt on the par-3 12th that drew virtually no applause. He laid up on the par-5 13th and made a 10-foot birdie, then hit a 9-iron to a back pin on the 14th that stopped 6 feet away. His final birdie, a 15-foot putt that swirled into the hole, gave him a comfortable margin.

But as so many others learned, no lead is safe. AP

Couples makes 22nd consecutive cut

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA—FORMER CHAMPION Fred Couples made the US Masters cut for the 22nd consecutive time after vaulting into contention with a two-under-par 70 in Friday's second round.

The 46-year-old American, winner at Augusta National in 1992, finished on three-under 141, three strokes adrift of tournament leader Chad Campbell.

Couples, who made his Masters debut in 1983, lipped out with a birdie attempt from eight feet at the par-four last that would have secured him outright second place.

He tapped in for par to end a difficult day of gusting winds in a share of second

with compatriot Rocco Mediate and first-round leader Vijay Singh of Fiji.

"That was a tough course today," Couples told reporters after moving into second place in the all-time list for successive Masters cuts. His run of 22 is the longest active streak.

"It wasn't really so hard to play the course but it was tough to get the ball close."

"I feel like I'm a very good lag putter, and you have to do that here. My eye catches the slopes pretty well."

The former world number one has produced nine top-10 finishes at Augusta, the most recent a tie for sixth in 2004. Reuters

Second round scores: 138—Chad Campbell 71-67 141—Rocco Mediate 68-73, Vijay Singh (FIJ) 67-74, Fred Couples 71-70 142—Tim Clark (RSA) 70-72, David Howell (ENG) 71-71, Darren Clarke (NIR) 72-70, Phil Mickelson 70-72, Ernie Els (RSA) 71-71 143—Nick O'Hern (AUS) 71-72, Billy Mayfair 71-72, Padraig Harrington (IRL) 73-70, Olin Browne 74-69, Ben Crenshaw 71-72, Retief Goosen (RSA) 70-73, Tiger Woods 73-71 144—Stephen Ames (CAN) 74-70, Scott Verplank 74-70, Jason Bohm 73-71, Rich Beem 71-73, Mike Weir (CAN) 71-73, Aron Oberholser 69-75 145—Justin Leonard 75-70, Ben Curtis 71-74, Stewart Cink 72-73, Geoff Ogilvy (AUS) 70-75, Shingo Katayama (JPN) 75-70, Davis Love 74-71, Rod Pampling (AUS) 72-73, 146—Zach Johnson 74-72, Carl Pettersson (SWE) 72-

74, Stuart Appleby (AUS) 71-75, Sergio Garcia (ESP) 72-74, Adam Scott (AUS) 72-74, Miguel Angel Jimenez (ESP) 72-74, Rory Sabbatini (RSA) 76-70, Luke Donald (ENG) 74-72, Robert Allenby (AUS) 73-73, 147—Tim Herron 76-71, Mark Hensby (AUS) 80-67, Angel Cabrera (ARG) 73-74, Larry Mize 75-72, Jose Maria Olazabal (ESP) 76-71 148—Ted Purdy 72-76, Brandt Jobe 72-76, Thomas Bjorn (DEN) 73-75, Jim Furyk 73-75 Failed to make the cut 149—Bart Bryant 76-73, Colin Montgomerie (SCO) 74-75, Thomas Levet (FRA) 78-71, Ben Crane 74-75, Vaughn Taylor 75-74, Michael Campbell (NZL) 75-74, Ian Woosnam (WAL) 77-72 150—Lee Westwood (ENG) 75-75, Chris DiMarco 76-74, Peter Lonard (AUS) 76-74, Todd Hamilton 74-76, David Toms 72-78. AP



TIGER hits his tee shot on the 17th hole. REUTERS

Lim ailing, stays at Metropolitan

BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES secretary general Graham Lim will have to remain at the Metropolitan Hospital in Tondo, Manila, for at least one more week.

This developed, after Lim's attending physician, heart specialist Dr. James Cayetano diagnosed yesterday afternoon that his blood pressure remains unstable.

In addition, Lim's heartbeat continues to be irregular.

Lim was hospitalized last March 31 after a medical checkup at the Bureau of Immigration office in Intramuros, Manila, bared that a week of confinement at the BI detention cell has taken its toll on his health.

The 49-year-old Lim, arrested by BI agents last March 24 due to an earlier BI ruling that he was a citizen of the Republic of China (Taiwan), also collapsed last Monday after a treadmill stress test.

According to Lim, Dr. Cayetano had given him tranquilizers so that he could relax and his blood pressure would stabilize in the next three days.

US swimmers train gun on Australian arch rivals

SHANGHAI—THE UNITED STATES took aim at fierce rivals Australia at the World Short-Course Swimming Championships on Saturday after igniting their campaign with a long-overdue medal spree.

The weakened US team had just one gold medal going into the third evening before victories by Margaret Hoelzer and Kate Ziegler, followed by Ryan Lochte's world record in the 200m medley.

However Australia hit back as sprint star Libby Lenton inspired a huge record in the women's 4x100m relay.

Lenton had earlier won individual gold in the 100m freestyle and Brooke Hanson claimed the 100m medley to move Australia on to seven titles, three more than the US.

Lochte said the US now had a good chance of overhauling Australia, who have led from day one.

"I think we have a great shot," said Lochte, 21.

"Hopefully how the US did tonight will hype up everyone else

and it will improve for tomorrow and Sunday. We'll see what happens."

Lenton, a triple world champion, was also relishing the chance to renew hostilities.

"For whatever reason the Australians and Americans have always had this fierce rivalry," she said.

"It definitely brings a lot of great racing out in competitions and championships. I think there's going to be a lot of great racing in the future."

The United States held off Australia at the Athens Olympics and at last year's long-course World Championships but without its biggest stars, Australia's women have dominated proceedings here.

The vaunted women's team, who took all but three gold medals at last month's Commonwealth Games, have contributed six of Australia's tally here with only Matt Welsh scoring for the men.

Sixteen titles will be decided on the final two evenings of the biennial competition, which is being held in China for the first time. AP



KAZAKHSTAN'S Vladislav Polyakov celebrates after winning the men's 200 meter breaststroke in 2:06.95. AP

Cubs win home tiff vs Cards

CHICAGO—GREG MADDUX pitched neatly into the seventh inning, Derrek Lee hit his second homer of the season and the Chicago Cubs won their home opener, 5-1 over the St. Louis Cardinals on Friday.

A week shy of his 40th birthday, Maddux earned his 319th Major League Baseball career victory. He sent the Cardinals to their first loss of the season after a three-game sweep at Philadelphia.

Lee put the Cubs ahead with a solo home run in the first inning. Neftali Perez added three hits for the Cubs and Ronny Cedeno tripled and doubled.

Maddux (1-0) gave up four hits, struck out one and walked two. He left with a 5-1 lead after allowing a home run to Jim Edmonds with one out in the seventh and walking the next batter, Scott Rolen. Bob Howry retired So Taguchi and Gary Bennett to end the threat. Dodgers 5, Phillies 3.

At Philadelphia, Dodgers starter Brett Tomko tossed six effective innings and Danyls Baez worked the ninth for his second save in two chances.

Tomko (1-0) allowed three runs and eight hits. Hong-Chih Kuo pitched two perfect innings, striking out four, and Baez struck out two in the ninth.

Major League results: Chicago Cubs 5, St. Louis 1; Cleveland 11, Minnesota 6; Boston 14, Baltimore 8; LA Dodgers 5, Philadelphia 3; Tampa Bay 9, Toronto 8; Cincinnati 7, Pittsburgh 6; NY Mets 9, Florida 3; Milwaukee 3, Arizona 1; Detroit 5, Texas 2; Houston 6, Washington 1; Kansas City 11, Chicago White Sox 7; LA Angels 4, NY Yankees 1; Oakland 5, Seattle 0; Colorado 10, San Diego 4; Atlanta 14, San Francisco 6.

Mayweather's perfection to be tested by Judah

LAS VEGAS—FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. sees years of jealousy in Zab Judah's eyes.

Mayweather is unbeaten and nearly unrivaled as the world's best kilo-for-kilo fighter. He's favored to win a championship belt in his fourth weight class when the two meet Saturday night for Judah's IBF welterweight title.

Mayweather (35-0, 24 KOs) is rich, charismatic and an emerging spokesperson for all boxers in a keenly image-conscious sport. In short, Mayweather is everything Judah (34-3, 25 KOs) could have been, and Mayweather thinks it just kills the underachieving New Yorker.

"This fighter's been jealous," Mayweather



MAYWEATHER Jr. flexes his muscles. AP

er said. "He's been so jealous of me, and I can't help it. All I've done was really dedicate myself... I've been here before, so many times, and I know what it takes."

Judah also is a three-time champ with enviable skills, but his unrealized potential is exemplified by three embarrassing defeat—including a loss in January against unheralded Argentine Carlos Baldomir, costing Judah millions of dollars in this matchup.

But the jealousy Mayweather perceives might be something else: Desperation for a fighter who must do something unprecedented to rescue his reputation. Unless Judah beats Mayweather, or at least seriously challenges the

unbeaten star, his career will be in shambles.

"This isn't a fight for money for Zab Judah," said Don King, Judah's promoter. "This is a fight for livelihood, for survival. He knows it, and Floyd Mayweather better know it, too."

"Zab has to put on a tremendous performance," said Mayweather promoter Bob Arum, who teamed up with longtime rival King for just the fourth time since 1975.

The fight carries the slogan "Sworn Enemies," but even boxing cliches can be somewhat accurate. The fighters exchanged words at Thursday's news conference and again at Friday's weigh-in outdoors at Caesars Palace hotel-casino. AP

Kobe's 51 can't eclipse Suns

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PHOENIX, ARIZONA—LOS ANGELES LAKERS star Kobe Bryant scored 51 points, but it was the Phoenix Suns who notched their 50th win of the National Basketball Association season here on Friday.

Steve Nash scored all 25 of his points in the first three quarters and Leandro Barbosa added 23 off the bench to lead the Suns to their seventh consecutive victory over the Lakers, 107-96.

Phoenix used a balanced attack to offset another dominant night by Bryant, who made 19-of-33 shots to score 51 points.

It was his fifth 50-point outing this season and his fourth consecutive game over 40.

Complete results: Boston 109, Philadelphia 99; Orlando 89, Detroit 87; Atlanta 114, Washington 101; NY Knicks 98, Indiana 96; Memphis 100, Milwaukee 90; N.O./Oklahoma City 95, Toronto 89; Utah 103, Minnesota 95; Dallas 92, San Antonio 88; Seattle 121, Portland 108; Houston 100, Golden State 93; Phoenix 107, LA Lakers 96; Sacramento 96, LA Clippers 93.

Solar Sports will air the NO/OKC-Dallas tussle at 10 a.m. today. The game will be shown simultaneously over RPN-9, which will also air the Philadelphia-Chicago encounter at 9 p.m.



KOBE Bryant shoots over the Suns' James Jones.

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Szczerbiak to miss rest of the season

NEW YORK—BOSTON CELTICS FORWARD WALLY Szczerbiak will undergo arthroscopic surgery on his left knee next week and is expected to miss the remainder of the season. A six-year NBA veteran, Szczerbiak has been bothered by pain and swelling in his knee for the past several months. He had an MRI scan on the knee Thursday. The Celtics acquired the 29-year-old Szczerbiak on Jan. 26 in a trade with the Minnesota Timberwolves. He was averaging 17.5 points for the Celtics in 32 games.

Reuters

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde



"I DID NOT have an abortion," says the beleaguered Heart Evangelista.

JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN

In her heart of hearts

By Marinel R. Cruz

I STILL HEAR PEOPLE SAY I HAD AN abortion. But at this point, I really don't care anymore. The good thing is, after dealing with that painful experience, I remain unscathed. I'm proud that I handled it well."

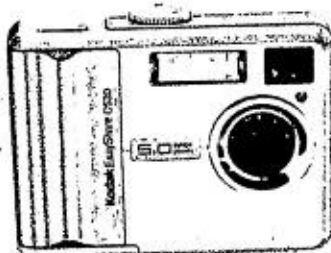
Actress and commercial model Heart Evangelista was speaking with INQUIRER En-

tertainment weeks after her battle with tabloid news that she was made pregnant by a man other than her current boyfriend, Jericho Rosales.

"I still deserve to be a role model for youngsters," Heart said in an exclusive interview at her Makati City home. "To prove that my good image wasn't tarnished, [the

IN HER HEART/A22

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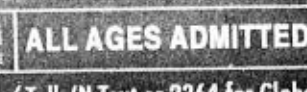
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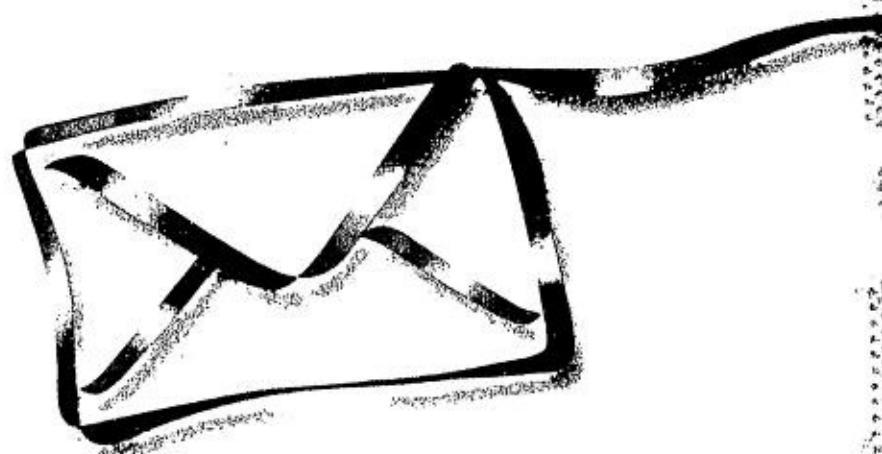
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ENTERTAINMENT

In her heart of hearts

From page A2-1

"companies that got me to endorse their products] didn't dump me. They still believe in me."

In her highly emotional interview recently on ABS-CBN's show biz talk program, "The Buzz," Heart said the rumor of her alleged "delicate condition" started to spread when she had an asthma attack and collapsed on the set of her TV series, "Panday." She said people interpreted it as a sign of pregnancy.

"Was there ever a time when people saw me with a really big tummy? Apart from the time that I was hospitalized because of asthma, I was never absent from the set. In fact, I never disappeared. People would see me everywhere—in parties or at the malls—especially when 'Panday' wasn't airing," Heart pointed out.

Heart is Eden to Jericho's Tristan in the latest TV version of Carlo J.

Caparas' "Panday" on ABS-CBN.

The young and pretty actress added: "I'm not really the type who minds what other people say. I just felt I had to talk about this pregnancy issue because I needed to assure my fans and endorsement clients."

Heart also denied rumors that her parents' disapproval of her relationship with Jericho drove her to move out of their house and live on her own.

"Not true," she stressed. "When I was still living with my parents in Cavite, this unit was our halfway house. It's been two years now since this became my home na talaga."

What lessons did you learn from that rumor?

I learned that it's not easy to live alone. I stepped out of my comfort zone—my parents' home—and I'm now exposed to the real world, one

that's full of snakes. I mean, people who lie and persecute others.

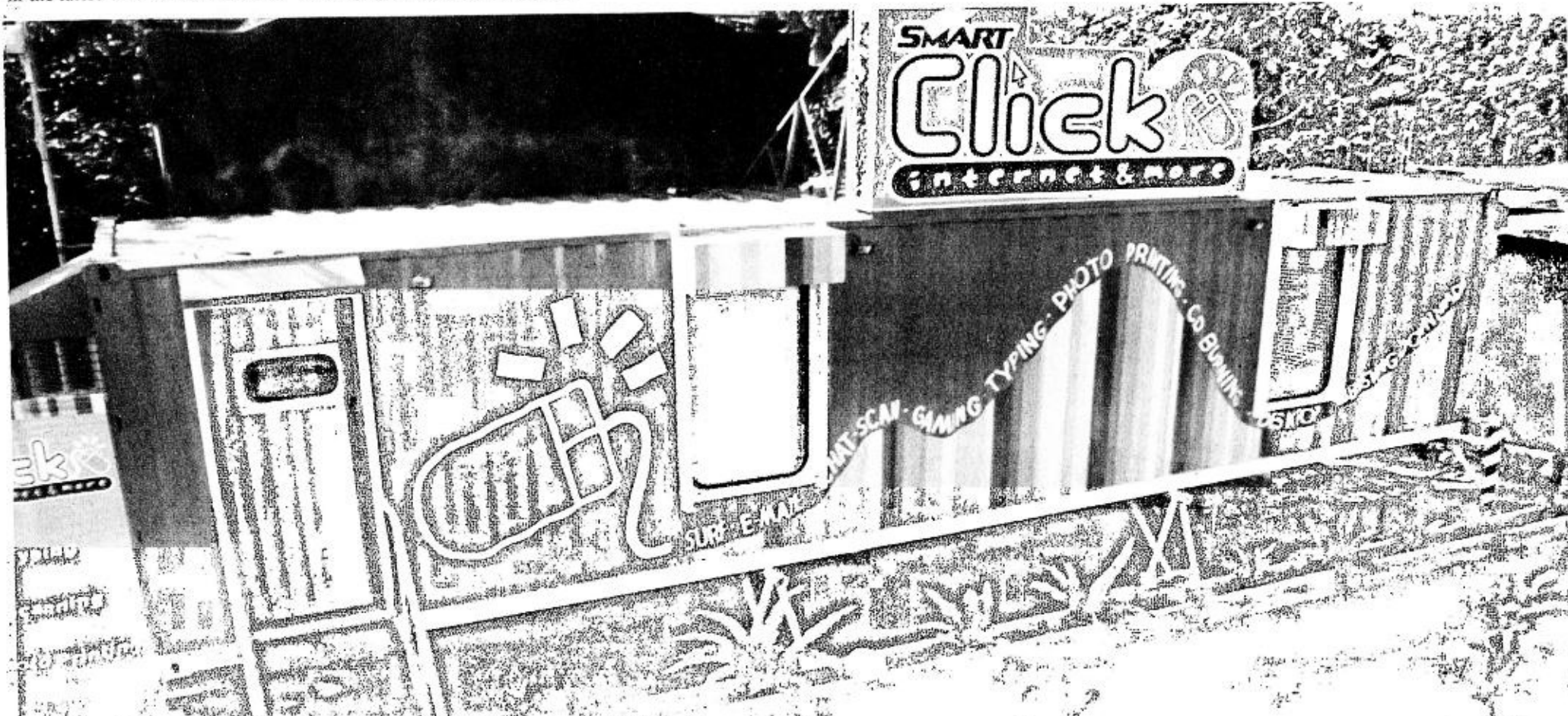
Who did you draw strength from during this trying time?

I had Echo (Jericho's nickname) and the whole [Manila] Genesis [Entertainment] backing me up. To me and the people close to me, this really wasn't that big of an issue. My manager (Angeli Pangilinan-Valenciano) told me: "Do not focus on the wind and waves because you will sink. Focus on God." That's what I'm doing.

What are the major changes in your life, now that you've become a Christian?

They're not really drastic changes. For example, when I go partying these days, you may notice

IN HER HEART/A2-4



Getting Batanes and the whole country CLICKing



Jerold Sobremonte in Basco chats with his idols Mike Enriquez & Rhea Santos in Quezon City via webcam.

SMART Communications and Batanes officials formally open SMART Click.



SMART President & CEO Napoleon Nazareno

Batanes and its 7,000 population are no longer isolated, thanks to SMART Click Internet & More.

"Previously, we have been isolated, not only geographically, but also in terms of communications," said Batanes Governor Vicente Gato when SMART Communications launched the SMART Click van along Castillejos Street in Basco. "Our residents can now get in touch with relatives in the United States, Germany, Japan, and in other parts of the world. I'd like to thank SMART for this very noble project, for bringing new communications technology to us."

SMART Click Internet & More is an air-conditioned 40-foot container van that houses 15 rentable computer terminals. Desktop publishing services include sending, printing and scanning of documents and photos. Online games, as well as webcams are also available.

The Internet provided by SMART Click is now Batanes' connection to the city and the rest of the world. When SMART Click opened, many Batanians excitedly tried the various services available.

One of them was 19-year-old high school graduate, Jerold Sobremonte. "Internet is a big help. With just one click, you can get all the information that you need," he said in the vernacular.

But for Jerold, SMART Click is not just a place to use the Internet. It will be his ticket to pursue his dream of getting a college diploma and maybe even a law degree later on.

Jerold's wish

Jerold grew up with his grandparents. He has nine stepbrothers and sisters. His father already passed away, and his mother is a barangay kagawad and a farmer. He now lives with his mother in a small makeshift one-room house with walls and roof made of GI sheets.

During high school, Jerold got odd jobs to pay for school expenses. He helped out in farms, accepted masonry jobs and other summer jobs. Despite the difficulties, he graduated from Batanes National Science High School where he was a consistent honor student and a Model Youth awardee.

Jerold now wants to take up BS Education in St. Dominic College in Basco, but his family could not afford the expenses. Luckily for Jerold, SMART teamed up with GMA-7's *Wish Ko Lang* to help grant his wish of a college education by providing him free computer training at SMART Click and,

upon finishing the short course, employ him as a lecturer in SMART Click's computer training sessions. Aside from that, Jerold also received materials for the renovation of their house plus a brand new scooter from SMART, a USB watch from Microsoft, and school supplies from SkyBlade.

Jerold's episode in *Wish Ko Lang* will be aired on April 22.

Your one-stop neighborhood digital shop in remote areas
"SMART aims to make Internet services accessible in towns and barangays in provinces nationwide. SMART Click will go to 'uncharted territories' to serve students, schools, businesses, and residents with family, relatives and friends abroad or in other cities," said SMART president and CEO Napoleon Nazareno.

This means that more SMART Click vans will be set up in places with limited or no provisions for high-speed Internet and other related computer and desktop publishing services. SMART will use a dedicated WiFi connection providing speeds of up to 1 Mbps. Right now, 20 SMART Click vans are initially lined up to be distributed in different locations across the country.

But it doesn't end there. According to Tina Mariano, head of SMART Public Access Group, "SMART is targeting a total of 1,000 SMART Click sites nationwide. These vans will not only serve as Internet Cafés, but also computer labs to promote computer literacy in many communities in the country."

Hon. Virgilio Peña, chairman of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT), said SMART Click branches in far-flung towns such as Basco will help the government achieve its goal of establishing a nationwide digital infrastructure in more than 1,500 municipalities by 2010.

"The government needs partners like PLDT and SMART. The availability of an Internet facility like SMART Click opens up people to the global community. The people of Batanes can now publicize and sell their products in the Internet. Students will also have the same quality of education as in Metro Manila and even the outside world," said Peña.

Let's get the whole country CLICKing!

SMART is currently looking for partners in bringing the benefits of SMART Click to more communities. Interested franchise operators can e-mail smartclick@smart.com.ph or call *777 (toll-free using any SMART Cellphone) or (02) 511-2643.



SMART officials enjoy the Batanes scenery.



Jerold and his mother receive the good news from SMART Public Access Group Head Tina Mariano.



SMART Click offers high-speed Internet access and more.



Commission on Information and Communications Technology Chairman Virgilio Peña

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SMART Click is now clicking in Basco, Batanes and Ayala, Zamboanga. Soon, it will reach even the farthest regions to bring connectivity and interactivity to everyone.

So whether you're up in the mountains or islands and seas away, watch out for SMART Click vans in our growing number of locations including:

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ENTERTAINMENT

'I'm determined to make the right choices in life'

From page A22

I'm not with the usual crowd or having the usual drinks.

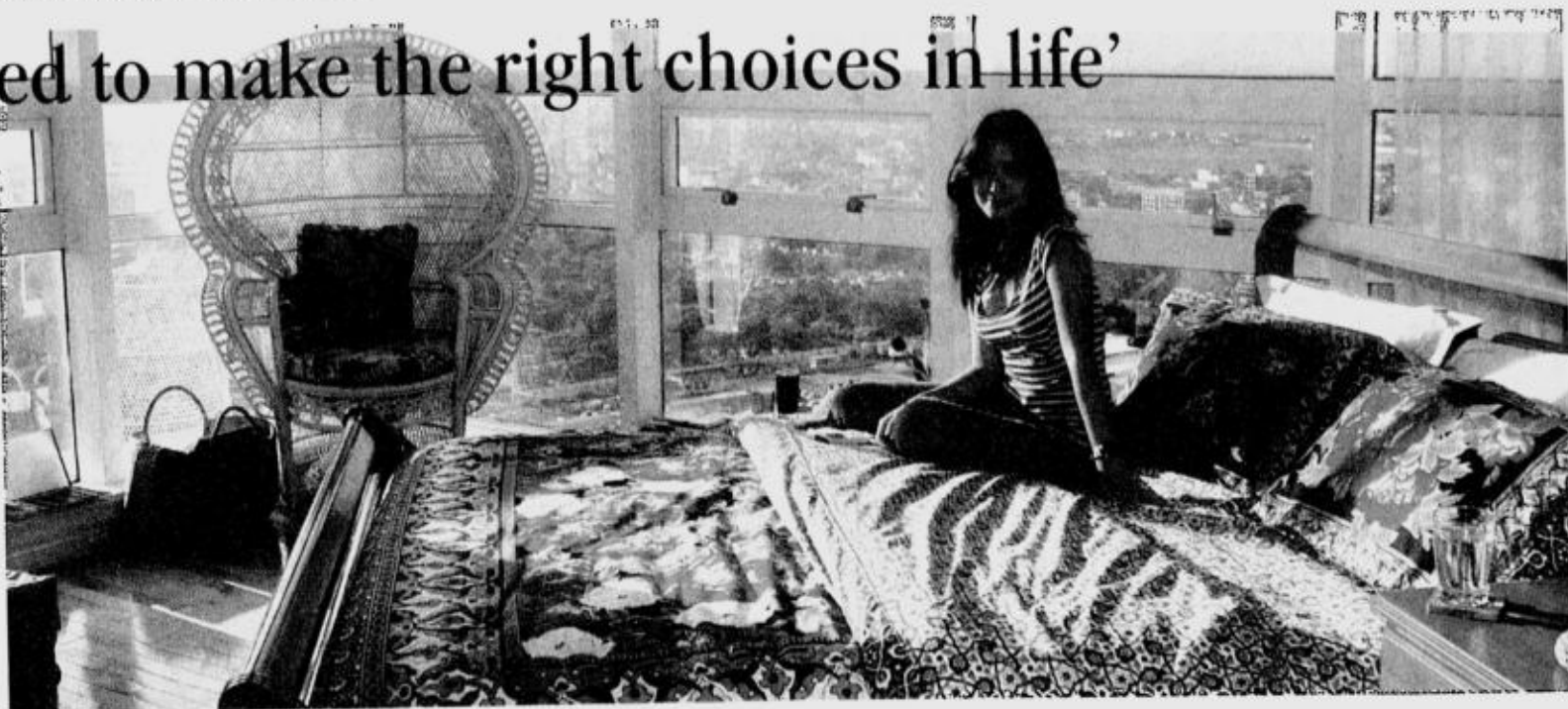
I also used to have no qualms about bed scenes. Now, I'm really not comfortable anymore, except probably if we're asked to do something similar to what Claudine Barreto did in "Kailangan Kita."

I also don't like doing horror movies. I personally feel [films like these] promote the negative side of people.

Why did you leave ABS-CBN's Artist Center and transfer to Genesis?

My contract [with ABS-CBN] ended in October. I joined Genesis in February. Echo knows Tito Gary (Valenciano). He thought it would be good if I join Tito Gary at Genesis. So I talked with Tita Angeli.

I felt I needed a change in my life. Leaving ABS-CBN was not easy. It's known for making big stars. But I felt I needed to take the risk. Now that I'm living alone, I'm determined to make the right choices.



HEART in her Makati home which, she says, used to be her Cavite-based family's halfway house.

ROUNDUP

Reality Spielberg

LOS ANGELES—Turns out even Steven Spielberg cannot resist the lure of reality television.

The Oscar-winning director of films including "Schindler's List" and "Saving Private Ryan" will join with reality TV mogul Mark Burnett for "On the Lot," a competition in which the winner receives a studio deal.

A nationwide search, with details yet to be determined, will be conducted to find 16 finalists, Fox said. The group will be brought to Hollywood, divided into teams, then given the task of producing one short film each week.



SPIELBERG

Kovac, star

ZAGREB, Croatia—Croatian actor Goran Visnjic, the brooding Luka Kovac in the US series "ER," is set to star in a movie from his homeland about imprisoned war crimes suspect Ante Gotovina.

Visnjic, whose fictional character in the emergency hospital series lost his children during wars in the Balkans, said recently he would like to play Gotovina in a movie being planned by Croatian director Antun Vrdoljak.

Gotovina, a retired general, is seen by many in Croatia as a hero of its 1991 independence war. But the UN war crimes court charged him in 2001 with allegedly orchestrating murders and expulsions of Serbs from Croatia in 2005.



VISNJIC

Clooney, plagiarist?

PARIS—A French screenwriter who alleges that the movie "Syriana" was largely plagiarized from her script has filed suit against George Clooney and Warner Bros., saying she wants 35 percent of the movie's takings in France and the United States.

Stephanie Vergnault claims that the oil-industry thriller borrowed "very largely" from a script she completed in 2002 titled "Oversight."

A preliminary hearing is set for Monday in Paris.

The suit targets Clooney's film company, Section Eight, which he formed with director Steven Soderbergh and Warner and Syriana's writer-director Stephen Gaghan.



CLOONEY

Cage's latest

LOS ANGELES—US movie star Nicolas Cage and rapper 50 Cent are teaming up to star in a new film based on the life of a real prison boxing coach, the industry press said Wednesday.

In the Universal Pictures movie "The Dance," Oscar-winner Cage, 42, will play coach Billy "The Kid" Roth who has spent more than 40 years as a volunteer boxing coach in prisons in the US state of Louisiana, Daily Variety said.

Musical icon 50 Cent will play a prison inmate.



CAGE



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ENTERTAINMENT



THAT'S Sharon Stone, of course, with an arm around this columnist's shoulder.

Best job in the world?

LOS ANGELES—TODAY, AS I MARK the first anniversary of this column, I pause to catch my breath from a year of meeting deadlines, interviewing celebrities and covering events.

For a change, I will not transcribe interviews or go over hieroglyphics (in countless notebooks) that pass for personal notes and observations.

I thank you most, readers—many of you told me in your e-mails that I have “the best job in the world.” I think this is a perfect time to finally answer what a lot of folks have been asking: How this *promdi* from Calasiao, Pangasinan, came to write a Hollywood column.

I begged for this column. Which is not to say that I am ungrateful to my section editor and editor in chief. I am very grateful to the INQUIRER. A few years ago, other writing outlets slammed their doors on me. I won't say why. I was hurt not so much professionally as personally. I mourned (and still mourn) the friendship that was affected.

Good karma

While I was moping, good karma caught up with me. From out of the blue, EIC Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, through then entertainment editor Louie Camino (who has since brought his predilection for all-white outfits up in heaven) offered to make my wife Janet and myself Los Angeles correspondents. It was a surprise blessing.

But even as I wrote articles and the occasional news stories, increasingly I realized that I had a lot of leftover stories to share. I needed a regular outlet—like a column!—that would encourage me to write about interviews and events more frequently, instead of filing them in my mind and chuckling

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales



over the memories, like the time I mistook Diane Kruger for Natalie Portman on the red carpet. That one I can picture myself laughing over someday, a silly old fool breaking into mysterious laughing fits in a Twinges for the Hinges aquatic workout at the local Y.

I broached the column idea to Louie who warned to the concept but, bless his heart—in his brave and difficult battle against a fatal illness—he may have not gotten around to proposing the column to LJM. After Louie passed on, which devastated Janet and me (we had known him since the '80s), I presented the column idea to the new editor, Emmie Velarde, who quickly presented it to LJM. They moved fast! On April 8 last year, “Only IN Hollywood” debuted. They picked the title and the mug shot. To this day, I don't know where they clipped the image from.

Remember the cliché, be careful what you wish for? I did not have a clue that writing a twice-weekly column would be so challenging. Before I know it, it's time to write another. “Only IN Hollywood” has taken over my life. I am writing sentences even in my sleep.

The column tapped perfectly into my obses

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2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

GLOBE PLATINUM
CINEMA

JUST FRIENDS
6:50 / 9:00
NANNY McPHEE
12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40

BANDIDAS
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30

ICE AGE 2
12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20

ICE AGE 2
1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25

MOMENTS OF LOVE
12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50

SHE'S THE MAN
2:00 / 4:20
LUCKY NUMBER SLEVIN
7:30 / 9:50

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1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50

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MALL CINEMAS

1 MOMENTS OF LOVE
12:00 / 3:10 / 6:20 / 9:40

2 ICE AGE 2
12:15 / 4:15 / 6:35 / 8:45 / 10:55

3 BANDIDAS
12:15 / 4:15 / 6:35 / 8:45 / 10:55

4 BASIC INSTINCT 2
12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30

5 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
12:55 / 3:15 / 5:35 / 8:05

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The digital future

Of course, movies will always be about the storytelling, but technology can keep the enthusiasm high

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IN THE UNITED STATES, THE DIGITAL debate rages: Can new digital systems replace film projectors?

The digital crossover was a hot topic at ShoWest, the largest annual convention for the movie industry which ran in Las Vegas from March 13-16 and attracted studio executives, theater owners and equipment vendors.

At ShoWest, Kodak Digital Cinema unveiled "the only full network system that seamlessly and efficiently connects all screens in a multiplex... [and covers everything] from ticketing... to digital feature projection."

Sony showcased a "complete digital cinema solution" and presented "designs for its 18,000 ANSI lumen version of the SXRD 4K projector, intended for screen sizes of 50 feet or more."

Some theater owners in the US, notably National Cinemedia, seem resistant to the digital shift, however.

"Digital cinema isn't ready for prime

time," said Kurt Hall, president of National Cinemedia, who added that his organization would "delay full-scale adoption until at least 2007."

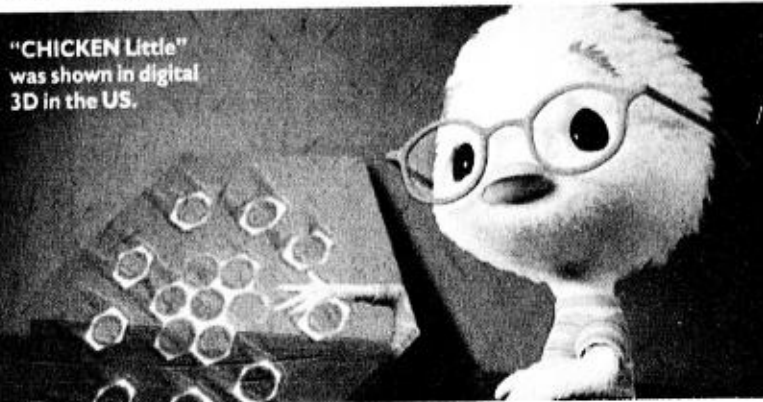
Industry insiders are hoping digital cinema will "revive US theater attendance which fell 9 percent in 2005."

Writer Annelee Ellingson of Box Office magazine offered an international perspective on the issue and quoted Julian Levin, executive vice president for digital exhibition and non-theatrical sales of Twentieth Century Fox, as saying: "The international market generally and significantly outperforms the US market in [the] box-office..."

Technical standards

Ellingson pointed out that profitability makes "international territories... a tempting market for digital cinema vendors, but the technical standards and deployment plans... may not translate overseas."

Doug Miller, executive vice president and managing director of Walt Disney In-



"CHICKEN Little" was shown in digital 3D in the US.

ternational (Asia Pacific), confirmed with INQUIRER Entertainment that his company was seriously looking into digital technology in its international operations.

In an exclusive interview during his Manila visit last July, Miller said: "Disney is now more aggressively involved in digital cinema. 'Chicken Little' is our first computer-generated animated feature. We're reaching out to the audience because it is changing the way it consumes [entertainment] products."

"Chicken Little" was released in Disney Digital 3D in Dolby Digital Cinemas in the US. Walt Disney Co. installed Dolby systems in 84 theaters for "Chicken Little" late last year.

In March 2002, Disney teamed up with other major Hollywood studios—Fox, MGM, Paramount, Sony, Universal and Warner Bros.—and created the Digital Cinema Initiatives (DCI).

According to the DCI web site, the studios' goals are to "ensure a uniform and high level of technical performance, reliability and quality control [for digital cinema]... and to help spur the deployment of digital cinema systems in movie theaters."

Superfluous

Miller explained that, in the future, digital cinemas would render 35mm film superfluous. "There'll be no need for prints. Movies will be sent via satellite or through fiber optic technology to the theaters or downloaded from a server."

The digital mode of movie distribution and delivery will decrease US studios' expenses in processing, printing and shipping film reels overseas and help curb piracy at the same time.

A report estimated that studios stand to save \$1 billion a year in print distribution costs.

There are about 300 digital cinemas now operational in the US, Miller related. "There are also a couple in Europe and China," he noted.

Will the wave reach Philippine shores soon?

"There's been some discussion," he said. "Some people have signified interest in it. We'll see where it goes. The technology is still being tested, to see the level of acceptance."

Around the same time as INQUIRER Entertainment's interview with Miller in July, the DCI announced the completion of the standards "to help projector manufacturers create uniform and compatible digital cinema equipment... to be used in the United States... and hopefully throughout the world."

Warner Bros., Sony Pictures and other studios welcomed the development.

In the DCI website, Warner Bros. president Dan Fellman announced that it will be "releasing movies in two formats—35mm film and DCI digital cinema—by the end of [2005]." George Lucas said, "Digital cinema will increasingly become the standard and will change the way movies are made, seen and experienced around the world."

Miller pointed out, however: "Technology is just a means to an end; not an end in itself. It's still about the content, the storytelling. What we need to do is think up new ways to use technology and reinvent the content to meet the demands of consumers today."

With a report from Reuters

Best job in the world?

From page A3-1

sive-compulsive streak. My wife and two daughters have learned to wade through a house littered with brown manila envelopes that contain notes and interview transcripts. On the front part of these envelopes are my black marker scrawlings—such as, "The Amityville Horror/In Good Company" (about the slasher remake plus that film with Dennis Quaid—the contrast was unintentional) and "Ang Pagdadalaga ni.../Masahista" (no, that's not a sequel where Maxi becomes a *masahista*; I wrote about those two films in one column).

Overachiever

At airports, a few minutes before boarding time, I'm the one you see still banging away on my trusty laptop, each keystroke putting pressure on colleagues traveling with me: "You're already writing your story?!" My dear wife, who is also a columnist, charges, "Overachiever!!!" when I let her read my column draft, two days before my deadline, for her opinion.

I am often sleep-deprived but I turn in my column on time. My reward, as the commercial goes, is priceless. I especially get tremendous satisfaction in writing about Filipinos

making it on the world stage.

And I still get excited to see in print what I have written. Well, since I am away from Manila, let's rephrase that to, I still get excited to see online what I have written. Janet rolls her eyes when she sees me reading my own column as if for the first time. I think one of these days she will finally tell me, in her best Cherie Gil impersonation, "You are nothing but a trying-hard, overachieving columnist!"

I can't wait for 8 a.m. (LA time) every Friday and Sunday when www.inq7.net posts my column. But now that we just switched to Daylight Saving Time in the US, I'll have to wait one more hour (9 a.m.). And if my column does not appear online on time, I click on my computer's refresh page button so many times, I hope I don't get Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

After seeing my column online, I want to know how it appears on print. Two friends, Ciso and Doris, feed this obsession. Via text or e-mail, they describe to me the print version. I think Ciso wakes up early Sunday mornings to report to me via text how my printed column looks. And then he goes back to sleep.

This column has been translated into French by websites dedicated to Hollywood stars. I showed one to my daughters, who naturally didn't believe when I said I had done it myself

Ciso, Doris, Janet's sister Eppie, my cousin Margie and a thousand other friends and relatives each separately collect PDI copies and send them to us by bulk via DHL, FedEx or as a paki to a visiting victim, a friend or returning balikbayan. One such hapless balikbayan asked a sender, "Bakit ka nagpapadala ng mga lumang diyaryo?" When I hold these print copies in my hand and see my column, I experience the same thrill as when I saw my byline for the first time in my Calasiao High School paper.

Dead Sea Scrolls

These print copies are treated like the precious Dead Sea Scrolls at home. Once, when Janet had our old Camry washed, she came home minus a stack of PDI copies that had just arrived. They were



WITH Billy Crystal, one of my favorite subjects

last seen in the backseat. Janet virtually flew back to the car wash. She dug into a trash can and found them. Turned out, an attendant had thrown all the copies. You bet the guy heard some choice words from my spouse. "They were old newspapers," the man protested.

Ah, but there's nothing like the feedback I get from readers all over the world. They make writing this column worth it. On a recent weekend in New York, I told actor Willem Dafoe that it was apt that he, with his affinity for the Philippines since he filmed "Platoon," got to present the IFC/Acura Someone To Watch Award to Fil-Am filmmakers Ian Gamazon and Neill Dela Liana at the Indie Spirit Awards.

"But I read that we mispronounced 'Cavite,'" Willem told me apologetically. It turned out that he read my column online on

how his award co-presenter, actress Lili Taylor, pronounced the title of Ian and Neill's film as "Ca-veet."

In London, a Filipino recognized my name. He writes *chismis*, he told my host. I was taken aback. I guess I do write *chismis* in a way—not the guess-who-is-having-an-affair variety but the guess-who-said-what kind.

French/Chinese connection

Readers and friends have e-mailed versions of my columns in... French and Chinese, translated by websites dedicated to Hollywood stars. I showed my column on Russell Crowe in French to our daughters Nikki and Ella who are studying that language in high school. They didn't believe me when I told them that, just for fun—I was bored—I wrote my column in French.

When readers tell me that I "have the best job in the world," they admire my apparent lifestyle of constant travels, parties and interviews with the stars. They don't know that I hold a second job to help pay the mortgage, send our two girls to a good school and so on. They don't see the bloodshot eyes (and the sagging eyebags), my frequent zombie state.

But hey, I could be digging ditches, right? So thank you, readers, for making me appreciate that I may indeed have one of the best jobs in the world.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

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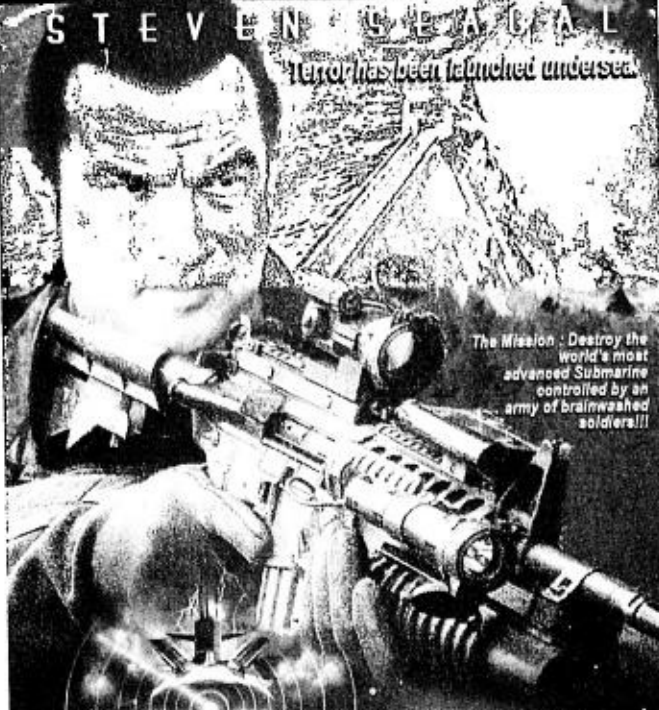
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BANDIDAS R13
1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15, 10:20

BASIC INSTINCT 2 R18
2:05, 4:30, 6:55, 9:20

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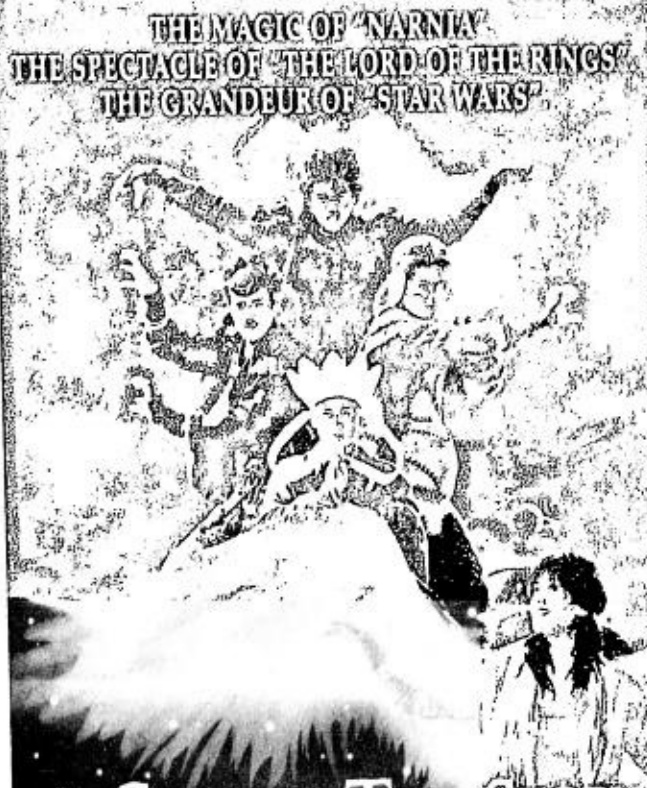
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A3-4

ENTERTAINMENT

Cruise says his father was a 'bully and a coward' who beat him up

NEW YORK—HOLLYWOOD SUPERSTAR Tom Cruise says his father was "a bully and a coward" who beat him during a childhood also marked by in-

timidation at school. In an interview with Parade magazine, the "Mission Impossible" hero painted a grim picture of his early years when

he struggled with a learning disability and the breakdown of his parents' marriage.

Cruise grew up in near poverty in a Catholic family, dominated by his abusive father—an electrical engineer who could never hold down a job and kept the family constantly in motion as he looked for work.

"He was a bully and a coward," said Cruise, 43. "He was the kind of person where, if something goes wrong, they

kick you.

"It was a great lesson in my life—how he'd lull you in, make you feel safe and then, bang!"

The Cruise family was largely supported by their mother, now 69, especially after their parents' divorce in 1974 when the future box office king was just 11 years old.

"My mother finally had the courage to stand up to my dad and go, 'No more! I'm not taking it. So long,'" he said. AFP

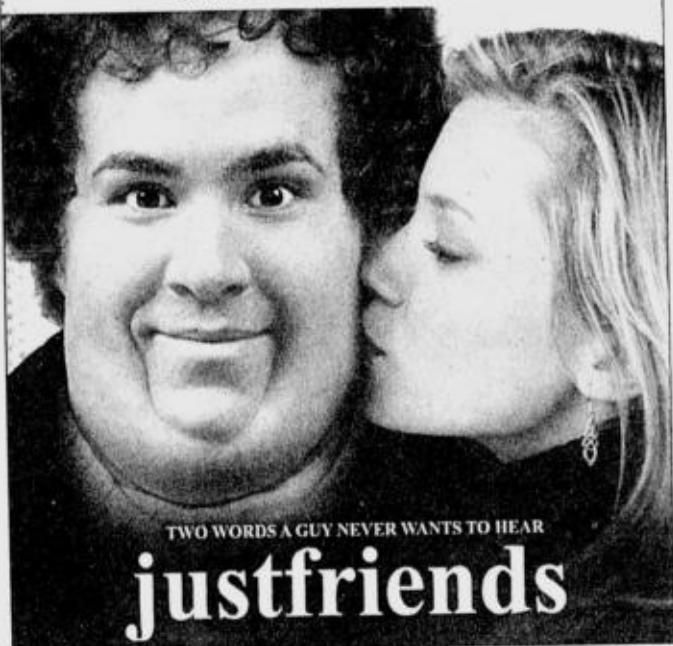
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SHANG CINEPLEX

1 ICE AGE 2

MTRCB: GP

1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 LMF

2 BANDIDAS

MTRCB: R-13

2:15, 4:35, 6:55, 9:15 LMF

3 NANNY MCPHEE

MTRCB: GP 2:00, 6:40

JUST FRIENDS

MTRCB: R-13 4:20, 9:00

4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES

MTRCB: R-18

12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE

BASIC INSTINCT 2

MTRCB: R-18 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF

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GUARANTEED SEATS
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THE HILLS HAVE EYES

1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00

R-18

ICE AGE 2

12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30

G

BANDIDAS

1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

R-13

BASIC INSTINCT 2

12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00

R-18

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ENTERTAINMENT

Mandisa: **Can't cry hard enough**

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

ELIMINATED "American Idol" finalist Mandisa admitted on Thursday (Friday in Manila) that although she shed tears on the show after the results were announced, it still wasn't a good enough cry for her.

"It hasn't sunk in," she said in this exclusive interview made possible by Star TV. "There were too many interviews after the show. Sure, I cried but, I haven't let it all go yet."

**INQUIRER
EXCLUSIVE**

**INQUIRER
EXCLUSIVE**

Mandisa said she had hoped to be an "American Idol"



so she could change the double standard where guys could be big and still be appreciated and be called "The Velvet Teddybear" (referring to Season 2 champion Ruben Studdard), whereas it remained "forbidden" to girls. She was quick to add that she had nothing against Ruben and that, in fact, she had a crush on him.

Mandisa had a theory about the show's bottom three this week. "Elliott (Yamin), Paris (Bennett) and I are all R&B/soul singers." The week's theme was country music.

Audience reaction was of shock and surprise when host Ryan Seacrest bid Mandisa goodbye. Seacrest said, "You've been a great spirit on the show."

You wrote that Jesus is your hero because he saved your life. Is there a story there?
Not anything in particular.

Did you feel sexy in the beautiful clothes that you wore on the show?

MANDISA/ A4-2

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1: Moments of Love
2: Lucky Number Slevin
3: Basic Instinct 2

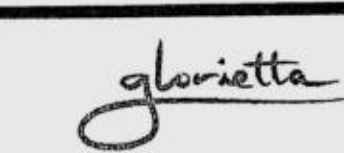
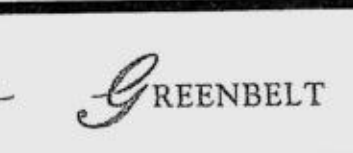
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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE HILLS HAVE EYES	2 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	3 CHINESE TALL STORY	4 MOMENTS OF LOVE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE HILLS HAVE EYES	2 GRANDMA'S BOY	3x BANDIDAS 12:05, 2:10, 4:15, 7:20, 8:25, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 THE HILLS HAVE EYES	2 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1x BANDIDAS 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2x ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1x ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	2 BANDIDAS		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	2 NANNY MCPHEE	3 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	4 ULTRAVIOLET
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	2 MOMENTS OF LOVE		
	3 CHINESE TALL STORY	4 BANDIDAS	5 THE HILLS HAVE EYES	

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**GLORIETTA 1 & 4
GREENBELT 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
MARKET! MARKET!**

MTRCB Rating:
TRISTAN & ISOLDE: Restricted 13
EIGHT BELOW: General Audience



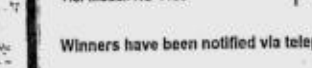

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REGULAR SHOWING STARTS ON APRIL 15!

MTRCB Rating: R-13
 (Only aged 13 and above will be admitted)

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EIGHT BELOW
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 San Lazaro, Southmall, Sta. Mesa, Sta. Rosa, Sucat and Valenzuela

MTRCB Rating: G

OPENS APRIL 15 AT SM CINEMAS

Distributed by **20th Century Fox**

METRO MANILA		
PODIUM	SM CITY FAIRVIEW	SM CITY MANILA
1. ICE AGE 2 12:00 FS / 12:30 MF / 02:35 04:40 / 06:45 / 08:20 LFS 08:50 LMF / 10:20 END	1. NANNY MCPHEE 2. ULTRAVIOLET 3. JUST FRIENDS 4. VENOM	1. CHINESE TALL STORY 2. ULTRAVIOLET 3. SHE'S THE MAN 4. ICE AGE 2
5. BANDIDAS 12:15 FS / 12:40 MF / 02:45 04:50 / 06:55 / 8:30 LFS 09:00 LMF / 10:35 END	5. FINAL DESTINATION 3 6. SHE'S THE MAN 7. BANDIDAS 8. MOMENTS OF LOVE 9. ICE AGE 2 10. V FOR VENDETTA 11. RESERVED 12. RESERVED	5. NANNY MCPHEE 6. BANDIDAS 7. GRANDMA'S BOY 8. FINAL DESTINATION 3 9. MOMENTS OF LOVE 10. V FOR VENDETTA 11. VENOM 12. JUST FRIENDS
SM MEGACINEMA	SM CITY STA. MESA	SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1. BANDIDAS 11:05 FS / 11:35 MF / 01:40 03:45 / 05:50 / 07:55 09:30 LFS / 10:00 LMF 11:35 END	1. ICE AGE 2 2. JUST FRIENDS 3. BANDIDAS 4. ULTRAVIOLET 5. MOMENTS OF LOVE 6. VENOM 7. NANNY MCPHEE 8. GRANDMA'S BOY 9. SHE'S THE MAN 10. V FOR VENDETTA	1. ICE AGE 2 2. BANDIDAS 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. VENOM 5. GRANDMA'S BOY 6. CHINESE TALL STORY 7. SHE'S THE MAN 8. ULTRAVIOLET
SM CITY NORTH EDSA	SM CITY BICUTAN	SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1. ICE AGE 2 2. JUST FRIENDS 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. BANDIDAS 5. CHINESE TALL STORY 6. GRANDMA'S BOY 7. ULTRAVIOLET 8. VENOM	1. ICE AGE 2 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. JUST FRIENDS 4. BANDIDAS	1. ICE AGE 2 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. SHE'S THE MAN 4. JUST FRIENDS
SM CITY DASMARIÑAS	SM CITY SAN LAZARO	SM CITY SUCAT
1. ULTRAVIOLET 2. HOUSE OF FURY 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. ICE AGE 2	1. ICE AGE 2 2. BANDIDAS 3. VENOM 4. GRANDMA'S BOY 5. JUST FRIENDS 6. MOMENTS OF LOVE	1. JUST FRIENDS 2. ICE AGE 2 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. BANDIDAS

SM CITY BAGUIO	LUZON	SM CITY PAMPANGA
1. FINAL DESTINATION 3 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. SHE'S THE MAN 4. ICE AGE 2	SM CITY BACORR	1. ICE AGE 2 2. ULTRAVIOLET 3. BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 4. NANNY MCPHEE 5. MOMENTS OF LOVE 6. MOMENTS OF LOVE
SM CITY MARILAO	SM CITY STA. ROSA	SM CITY LUCENA
1. FINAL DESTINATION 3 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. ICE AGE 2 4. VENOM	1. SHAGGY DOG 2. ULTRAVIOLET 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. ICE AGE 2	1. HOUSE OF FURY 2. ICE AGE 2 3. V FOR VENDETTA 4. MOMENTS OF LOVE
SM CITY BATANGAS	SM CITY STA. ROSA	SM CITY MOLINO
1. HOUSE OF FURY 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. ICE AGE 2 4. V FOR VENDETTA	1. SHAGGY DOG 2. ULTRAVIOLET 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. ICE AGE 2	1. ICE AGE 2 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. SHE'S THE MAN 4. VENOM

SM CITY CEBU	VISAYAS MINDANAO	SM CITY DAVAO
1. ULTRAVIOLET 10:50 FS / 11:00 MF / 12:45 2:30 / 04:15 / 06:00 07:45 / 09:15 LFS 09:30 LMF / 11:00 END	SM CITY ILOILO	1. CASANOVA 2. NANNY MCPHEE 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE 4. THE DARK 5. SYRIANA 6. ICE AGE 2
2. ICE AGE 2 10:50 FS / 11:00 MF / 12:45 2:30 / 04:15 / 06:00 07:45 / 09:15 LFS 09:30 LMF / 11:00 END	1. HOUSE OF FURY 2. RESERVED 3. ICE AGE 2 4. FINAL DESTINATION 3 5. MOMENTS OF LOVE 6. VENOM 7. RESERVED 8. THE DARK	1. ULTRAVIOLET 2. RESERVED 3. SHAGGY DOG 4. ICE AGE 2
3. BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 10:50 FS / 11:00 MF 01:06 / 03:12 / 05:18 07:24 / 09:05 LFS 09:30 LMF / 11:10 END	1. NANNY MCPHEE	
4. NANNY MCPHEE		
5. GLORY ROAD		
6. V FOR VENDETTA		
7. MOMENTS OF LOVE		
8. FINAL DESTINATION 3		

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GALLERIA **632-9116**

1. LUCKY NUMBER SLEVIN • THX 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	6. GRANDMA'S BOY 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
2. ICE AGE 2 11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50	7. MOMENTS OF LOVE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3. BANDIDAS 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	8. JUST FRIENDS 1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00
4. CHINESE TALL STORY 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00	9. SHE'S THE MAN 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00
5. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00	10. BASIC INSTINCT 2 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

ERMITA **536-7809 to 12**

1. ICE AGE 2 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00	5. BANDIDAS 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2. CHINESE TALL STORY 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	6. GRANDMA'S BOY 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
3. JUST FRIENDS 12:00 1:40 3:20 BASIC INSTINCT 2 5:30 7:40 9:50	7. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
4. MOMENTS OF LOVE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	

METRO EAST **682-8193 • 682-8199**

1. JUST FRIENDS 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00	5. CHINESE TALL STORY 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
2. ICE AGE 2 12:30 2:45 5:00 7:15 9:15	6. BASIC INSTINCT 2 1:05 3:40 6:20 9:05
3. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05	7. BANDIDAS 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
4. GRANDMA'S BOY 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10	8. MOMENTS OF LOVE 11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

NOVALICHES **935-3231 / 935-3229-30**

1. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2. BASIC INSTINCT 2 3. MOMENTS OF LOVE	4. LUCKY NUMBER SLEVIN 5. ICE AGE 2
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CITISQUARE MALABON **288-2576** **PIONEER** **687-5378**

1. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2. MOMENTS OF LOVE 3. RESERVE 4. RESERVE	1. BANDIDAS 2. ICE AGE 2 3. THE HILLS HAVE EYES 4. GRANDMA'S BOY
--	---

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TRISTAN & ISOLDE
 from executive producer Ridley Scott comes a sweeping tale of love and loss,
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catch the
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APRIL 10 to 12

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

OPENS on APRIL 15

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Mandisa: Can't...

From page A4-1

I just felt beautiful and when Simon said that I was sexy that one night, I was a little bit embarrassed. I don't get called that very often.

You've done a lot of singing in the Christian music industry and backup on tours and things like that. Which do you think you're going to concentrate on now?

Oh, gosh, that's such a hard question. I have to think and really pray about it. I hope to do both but I need to pray and see where the Lord leads me.

Some people have called you a female Ruben Studdard. How do you feel about that?

I love Ruben so I will take it.

Why do you think you were voted off?

It could have something to do with my song choice, or something to do with my stance on my faith. It could have something to do with people thinking that I was safe and they didn't need to vote. I mean, really, it could be just about anything. I have no idea.

Do you think the American public cares about size in this singing competition?

I think it really is about the whole package. And while I feel like people can embrace somebody that's plus size, I think it could have played a factor as well. But not ultimately. I feel like ultimately it has more to do with who I am than how I look.

Did Simon say anything to you when you left last night?

Yes, he told me that he really liked me. He said that he thought I had a great voice. But he said it's all about the song and he could not stand my song.

You told us that you had a little crush on Ruben Studdard. Has he reached out to you?

No, not yet. But I'm expecting it.

He's going to call you or are you going to call him?

Well, I'm not going to call him. He's going to call me.

You made a comment a few minutes ago that you are dealing with your weight. What does that mean?

Well, you know, since my first audition in Chicago up until now, I have not gotten on a scale. But I do know that I've lost a considerable amount of weight, probably 30 or 35 pounds. I exercise, I try to eat healthy and I'm just trying not to let food dictate my life.

How far did you think you would make it in the competition?

My goal was the top three.

Who do you think will win?

Oh, that's such a hard question? It is the greatest top eight.

Catch "American Idol" on Star World on its new timeslot: Wednesday and Thursday at 5:00 p.m. direct satellite, 8:00 p.m. primetime and 11:30 p.m. replay.

**'GOSPEL OF JUDAS'**

The National Geographic Channel premieres "The Gospel of Judas" tonight at 10. The Holy Week special is based on a document, reportedly 2,000 years old, discovered by chance in Egypt in the 1970s. The National Geographic Society, which will present the document in a press conference this month, says it "presents a totally new account of the life of Jesus Christ." Repeat dates: Wednesday, April 12, 10 p.m.; April 21, 11 p.m.; and April 27, 9 p.m.

CBN special on GMA 7

"SA NGALAN NG ANAK," A STAR-STUDDED Holy Week special produced by the Christian Broadcasting Network airs on GMA 7 at 7 p.m. on Good Friday.

The roster includes Victor Neri, Dennis Trillo, Romnick Sarmenta, Robert Arevalo, Alicia Alonzo, Tirso Cruz III, Ricky Davao, Chanda Romero, Emma Yuhico, Nancy Castiglione, Erich Gonzales, Melissa Mendez, Lorenzo Mara and Coney Reyes.

Reyes is also the supervising producer of the two-hour drama written by Raquel Villavicencio and directed by Marjo J. De los Reyes.

Sexy Women, High Adventure & Non-Stop Action. A \$60M Giant Production from LUC BESSON & 20th Century Fox

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Tunay pong nakagagalak ang maging number 1 tayo sa Asya*, pero higit pong nakatataba ng puso ang patuloy naming pangunguna sa puso ng ating mga kababayan.

1st QTR 2006 OVERALL RATINGS

Mega Manila TV Households

	TOTAL DAY (6 am - 12 mn)
GMA	18.3
ABS-CBN	13.7
DIFF (GMA-ABS)	4.6

CHANNEL RATINGS BY DAYPART

Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006 vs. 2005

	MORNING (6 am - 12 nn)	AFTERNOON (12 nn - 6 pm)	EVENING (6 pm - 12 mn)
GMA	9.4	19.6	25.7
ABS-CBN	6.5	13.9	20.7
DIFF (GMA-ABS)	2.9	5.7	5.0

9 OUT OF THE TOP 10 Morning PROGRAMS ARE ON GMA

Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006

RANK	PROGRAM	CHANNEL	RATINGS %
1	SAD LOVE SONG	GMA	17.5
2	DORAEMON	GMA	14.3
3	SASSY GIRL CHUN HYANG REWIND	GMA	13.6
4	SONIC X	GMA	13.3
4-5	SWEET 18 REWIND	GMA	13.3
6	MAYNILA	GMA	12.7
7	SIS	GMA	12.4
8-9	SPRING DAY	ABS-CBN	10.5
8-9	ATTIC CAT REWIND	GMA	10.5
10	KAY SUSAN TAYOI	GMA	10

9 OUT OF THE TOP 10 Evening PROGRAMS ARE ON GMA

Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006

RANK	PROGRAM	CHANNEL	RATINGS %
1	JEWEL IN THE PALACE	GMA	35.1
2	MAJIKA	GMA	33.7
3	MY NAME IS KIM SAM SOON	GMA	33.6
4	ENCANTADIA: PAG-IBIG HANGGANG WAKAS	GMA	31.7
5	BITOY'S FUNNIEST VIDEOS	GMA	29.8
6-7	EXTRA CHALLENGE	GMA	29.4
6-7	SA PILING MO	ABS-CBN	29.4
8	ETHERIA	GMA	29.2
9	24 ORAS	GMA	28.8
10	STARSTRUCK: THE NATIONWIDE INVASION	GMA	28.6

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Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006

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1	JEWEL IN THE PALACE	GMA	35.1
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5	BITOY'S FUNNIEST VIDEOS	GMA	29.8
6-7	EXTRA CHALLENGE	GMA	29.4
6-7	SA PILING MO	ABS-CBN	29.4
8	ETHERIA	GMA	29.2
9	24 ORAS	GMA	28.8
10	STARSTRUCK: THE NATIONWIDE INVASION	GMA	28.6

9 OUT OF THE TOP 10 Afternoon PROGRAMS ARE ON GMA

Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006

RANK	PROGRAM	CHANNEL	RATINGS %
1	EAT BULAGA	GMA	26.7
2	KOMIKS	ABS-CBN	23.6
3	DAISY SIETE	GMA	21
4	FROG PRINCE	GMA	19.1
5	WISH KO LANG!	GMA	18.9
6	AGAWIN MO MAN ANG LAHAT	GMA	18.2
7	KUNG MAMAHALIN MO LANG AKO	GMA	18.1
8-9	NOW AND FOREVER	GMA	17.5
8-9	WAG KUKURAP	GMA	17.5
10	STARTALK	GMA	16.6

7 OUT OF THE TOP 10 LATE NIGHT NEWS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS ARE ON GMA

Mega Manila TV Households 1st qtr 2006

RANK	PROGRAM	CHANNEL	RATINGS %
1	SAKSI LIGA NG KATOTOHANAN	GMA	9.6
2	GMA FLASH REPORT SPECIAL EDITION	GMA	7.6
3-4	EMERGENCY	GMA	7.1
3-4	PINOY ABROAD	GMA	7.1
5	I-WITNESS	GMA	6.8
6-7	INSIDER SA GITNA NG AKSYON, SA LOOB NG BALITA	ABS-CBN	6.1
6-7	REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK	GMA	6.1
8	THE CORRESPONDENTS	ABS-CBN	4.7
9	DEBATE WITH MARE AT PARE	GMA	3.6
10	PIPOL	ABS-CBN	3.9

Asahan n'yo pong patuloy kaming maghahatid ng mga programang inyong kagigiliwan, aabangan at tunay na pagkakatiwalaan.

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NONOY Zuñiga

CARMi Martin

CHRISTOPHER de Leon

ISAY Alvarez

TIRSO Cruz III

PINKY de Leon



PROGRAM host Peter Kairuz with Coney Reyes



KAREN Davila



AUDI Gemora



COUPLE Anthony Pangilinan and Maricel Laxa

What stars pray for



MARICEL Soriano



LOVI Poe

RECENTLY, IT WAS for the country's spiritual and economic revival.

The stars were at the forefront of the "700 Club Asia 3-Day Prayerthon," co-produced by ABS-CBN and the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) Asia.

The photos here were taken from the studio, not a call center.

Coney Reyes, Christopher de Leon, Tirso Cruz III, Anthony and Maricel Pangilinan, Karen Davila, Mari Kaimo, Carmi Martin, Carla Martinez, Pinky de Leon, Nono and Zebdée Zuniga, and many others took to the phones by way of joining program host Peter Kairuz in rallying all Filipinos in prayer.

The three-part "prayerthon" was aired live overfrom ABS-CBN's Studio 1 and later shown in North America and Europe through The Filipino Channel (TFC). Viewers were challenged to make an unusual pledge: to pray for 40 days using a prayer guide downloaded through www.cbnasia.org.

Most Beautiful Celebrity

The ever-youthful Maricel Soriano was named Actress of the Year, Scene Stealer of the Year and Most Beautiful Celebrity during Yes! Magazine's sixth anniversary celebration.

Fresh and sweet

Lovi, Sony BMG's new OPM artist, could pass for a movie

star with her fresh and sweet looks. Her debut single, "I Love You," landed No. 1 position on RX 93's "Countdown Top 7"—the first time a local singer grabbed the slot since Christian Bautista and Nina.

Christian bottles

Christian Bautista's face is on screaming streamers and billboards in Jakarta, In-



ISABEL Oli



RIO Locsin

donesia these days. He recently helped launch a new content provider called Star SMS. Soon, his image will also be printed on bottles of San Miguel teas and juices that will be sold only in Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and China.

Just friends?

Actress/Myra E girl Isabel Oli and actor Paolo Contis, who worked together in the now-defunct drama series "Sugo," were recently spotted watching a movie at the Eastwood City Cinemas in Libis, Quezon City. They insist there's nothing more than friendship between them.

Dawn in Tagaytay

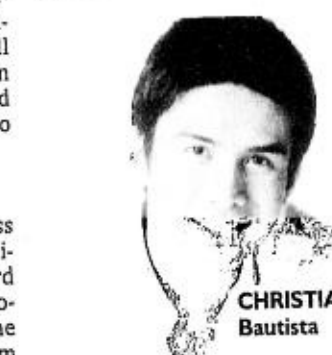
Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo was a no-show at the press conference for her latest drama series on GMA 7, "Duyan," on Friday. The actress reportedly fell ill after a long day of taping in Tagaytay City on Thursday and opted to rest at the Lagdameo home there.

Gown for Africa

In London, British actress Keira Knightley, who was nominated for a Best Actress award at last month's Oscars, has donated the Vera Wang dress she wore at the ceremony to Oxfam



KEIRA Knightley



CHRISTIAN Bautista

to raise money for their work in East Africa.

Knightley, 21, wore a one-shouldered, deep-claret gown to the awards where she was nominated for her role in "Pride & Prejudice." The dress will be auctioned on the eBay website. Bidding will begin on April 21 and finish on April 30 with all proceeds going to Oxfam's East African Food Crisis Appeal. Reuters

They're helping Kate deliver Tom's baby in silence

LOS ANGELES—HOLLYWOOD stars John Travolta and Anne Archer are publicly backing fellow Scientologist Tom Cruise and fiancée Katie Holmes' plan to give birth to their highly anticipated baby in silence.

Cruise and Holmes, together dubbed "Tomkat" by the popular press, are preparing to welcome their first baby into the world any day now using the church's "quiet birth" method, which has been the object of media derision.

Last-minute

But as Cruise and Holmes completed their last-minute baby shopping, a constellation of celebrity Scientologists has come out in support of the birth method in which the mother, father and medical staff in the delivery room are strongly discouraged from speaking.

The church's founding father, science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, believed that babies, like other people, can subliminally soak up words shouted around them at birth that could come back to negatively influence him later in life.

"It's just good common sense to have a quiet and creates a calm and loving environment," said Archer, best known for her role as Michael Douglas' terrified wife in the 1987 movie "Fatal Attraction." "When a woman is in labor, it is very intense, and when everyone is moving around and chatting, it's very hard to deal with the discomfort," she said.

"Pulp Fiction" and "Saturday Night Fever" Travolta and his actress wife Kelly Preston also weighed in this week, telling the movie website imdb.com that absolute silence was not required of a mum-to-be.



JOHN Travolta



ANNE Archer

"Just try to keep it as quiet as possible. Of course you're going to groan and yell. It hurts. Just keep it to a minimum," Preston said. "There are unwanted emotions and pain that goes along with any birth," added Travolta.

Public attention was focused on the week when photographers snapped pictures of "birthing boards" being delivered to the

Beverly Hills mansion shared by Cruise, 43, and 26-year-old Holmes.

One board is said to have read: "Be silent and make all physical movements slow and understandable," sparking media controversy and mockery over the Scientology technique.

Sensational

But Archer, 58, who also played the long-suffering wife of Harrison Ford's secret agent character in "Patriot Games" (1992) and "Clear and Present Danger" (1994), said the reports were sensational and inaccurate and that she had never heard of the use of such placards during childbirth.

"The aim is to keep it as quiet as possible. Of course you can't banish words completely, that would be ridiculous," said Archer, a practitioner of Scientology for nearly three decades, dismissing reports

that mothers are barred from shouting out in pain or uttering a word during childbirth.

"Everything that happens around you is still recorded just below one's consciousness level and words in particular; shouting things like 'push, push'; can sometimes have an adverse effect later in life," she said.

She also rubbished reports that Scientologist mothers-to-be cannot take medication to ease their pain—the church shuns the use of some drugs, particularly psychological ones.

"Scientology has nothing to say about the use of drugs. We all know it's better not to use them, but it's totally between the doctor and the patient," Archer said. AFP



KATIE Holmes and Tom Cruise

Battle for supremacy



SNEAK PREVIEWS

"Tristan and Isolde," starring James Franco and Sophia Myles, will have sneak previews tomorrow and Tuesday in Metro Manila, Pampanga and Cebu cinemas. The myth of the brave young knight Tristan and the Irish princess Isolde originated as a Celtic legend from the Dark Ages, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance.

THERE'S LITTLE THAT'S BASIC TO the deadly instincts on dramatic display in the current film, "Basic Instinct, 2," with Sharon Stone as its wily protagonist-antagonist and sexy anti-heroine.

The new production is so intent on keeping its story steamy and complicated that it pulls in a flurry of elements and influences that end up confounding viewers who try to keep up with its plot twists and turns.

At the core of these roller-coaster events is the relationship between Stone's novelist character and her psychiatrist. As the story starts to unspool, they have an antagonistic relationship, because the psychiatrist has been tasked to find her mentally incompetent, so that she won't be granted bail after she's charged with murder.

Later, however, Stone finds herself fixated on her learned antagonist, and stops at nothing until he agrees to take her on as a patient.

During their session, the two intense individuals battle for supremacy, and the psychiatrist has his hands full trying to make his celebrity patient accept who's the boss in his office.

The point gets blurred, however, when the psychiatrist's couch is used for less, ah, clinical activities. An older colleague chides him for breaking the basic rule for doctors not to

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



become personally involved with their patients, but Stone has seduced him so successfully that he's too far gone to regain his professional bearings.

While all this is happening, people are being killed left and right, in increasingly more lurid ways, until the psychiatrist realizes that he's in way over his head. But, it turns out that it's too late for him to stop playing the deadly "game" that Stone has put into play.

But, why would she go to so many lengths to make so many people's lives miserable—simply to research her latest steamy whodunit?

Or, could the master plotter in fact be the psychiatrist, to cover up something sinister in

his past?

Or, come to think of it, the master villain could be the top cop who's investigating the serial murders—he too has skeletons in his closet that he wants to keep from rattling and tattling in public.

These complex developments are meant to keep viewers excited as they try to second guess how the movie will end. But they get to be too complicated, so some viewers simply switch off.

Granted, Stone's icy allure is a major attraction that keeps viewers interested, and the movie's sexy interludes are additional come-ons. But they also pall after a while, so when the movie finally reaches its denouement, it isn't the exciting climax it intends to be.

'Kabilang Mundo'

ALPHA Music has released Siakol's "Kabilang Mundo" album, containing 12 punk-rock tracks. Notable numbers include "Plastic," "Nilalang," "Kwarto," "Aanhin," "Teka Lang," "Bidyoke" and the title track.



Worst so far

From Samantha Lee
(love_find05@yahoo.com) Makati City:

To quote another reader's feedback: "TV is such an influential medium that it should be used responsibly, because it can send out the wrong signals and make [the youth] think that's the way they should behave..."

It has become GMA7's and ABS-CBN's constant goal to outdo each other. They have come up with so many reality shows, it would require too much space for me to enumerate all of them and give my views on each one. So I'm narrowing down my views to two:

The latest GMA7's "Extra Challenge Eh Kasi Bata" edition was the worst so far for me, because it has showcased kids. Have we all become that hungry for money and entertainment?

Distress

The two seasons of ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother" proved that isolation from the "outside world" can lead to emotional distress and confusions for its participants however smart and upright they may initially be. I am wondering if the parents of participants in the upcoming "PBB Teen Edition" have thought over the consequences of their children joining the show.

Will ABS-CBN be responsible enough for the participants' behavior in the show? How far these teens will go, I can only imagine, given the behavior of this generation's youth. I am not saying this to disparage the show or the youth of today. I'm merely stressing the point that even supposedly emotionally stable participants who joined the previous editions got "dazed and confused." What more teenagers? I hope I am wrong in this, but I'm afraid the Teen Edition is bound to produce the worst scenario. Thank you and more power to you.

2ND WEEK
MTRCB R-18
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SHARON STONE

BASIC INSTINCT 2

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Antonio Forcione, Hendrix of the acoustic guitar

PAUL MCCARTNEY ONCE TOLD HIM, "YOU have a beautiful touch."

Award-winning Antonio Forcione, also known as the "Jimi Hendrix of the acoustic guitar," is considered one of the most charismatic and inventive performers from Europe. He successfully brings the most conventional sound of the popular acoustic guitar to the field of jazz as well as Spanish, African, Brazilian and improvised music.

His has earned critical acclaim for his tours around the world—from Australia and Hongkong, Russia, The Caribbean, the United States and all over Europe.

His 13 albums have landed at the top of British and international jazz charts. He has played with some of the world's most accomplished musicians, including John McLaughlin, John Scofield and Leo Kottke.

He is the current musical director and a performer for the award-winning trio, Ole. In 2001, he won the 'Best Spirit of the Fringe Award' at the Edinburgh Festival.

Next month, the Antonio Forcione Quartet performs back-to-back with the Cynthia

SHOW TIME



DOUGLAS Nierras

Alexander Group in concerts at Crossroad 77 on May 4 and at Theatre One of SM City-Cebu on May 6, 2006. Shows start at 8:00 p.m.

Call the British Council, 914-1011 to 14 local 130, or log onto www.britishcouncil.org.ph.

Powerdancing

A show of magical and aerial dancing entitled "Powerdancing in the Dark," featuring Douglas Nierras Powerdance is set at the Meralco Theater on April 30 and May 1.

The new concept, Black Theater Dance, seeks to break the physical barriers of gravity and human body. Walls and thin air become part of the dance floor. Pieces of cloth evolve into human form and become characters in luminous neon colors.

Call Powerdance Studio at 9958287.

'American Idol'

Witness the country's biggest "American Idol" fans match wits and wisdom in Star

World's American Idol Know-It-All contest today, 4pm at the Glorietta 4 Park. (Fronting Oakwood).

Special guests include Jimmy Bondoc and Luke Mijares. Join the jam for fun, games and win prizes!

Today

Iza Calzado at Metropolis Star Alabang; 4 p.m.

Tomorrow

Strings of Soul and Michaelangelo at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

April 11

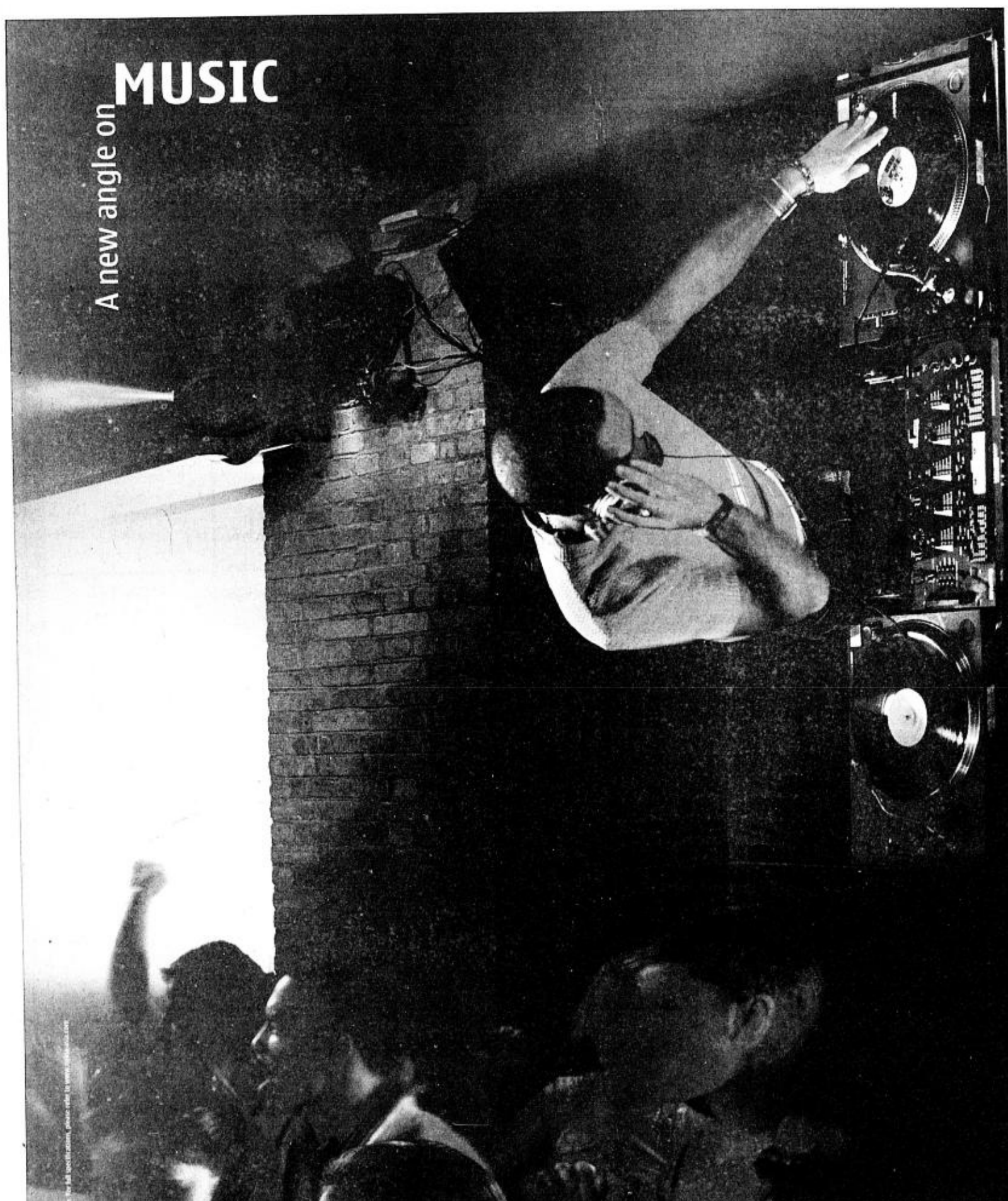
Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Strings of Soul and



ANTONIO Forcione

A new angle on MUSIC



MYMP at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3
Mae at Merk's

April 17

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Strings of Soul and Michaelangelo at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 18

Strings of Soul and MYMP at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Aretha and the Souled Out Band at Merk's

April 19

Moontrucks at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Dimsum at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 20

Abrakadabra at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Mocha at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Acoustic Jive at Merk's

April 21

RJ 'n Friends with the Members Band at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

9th Avenue at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 22

Kamikazee at Starmall Edsa; 4 p.m.

Mr. God and Company at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Tribe of Levi at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Flintstones and the Gang at Merk's

April 23

Katrina Halili at Metropolis Star Alabang; 4 p.m.

AiAi Delas Alas' Maggi Magic Sarap Palengke Tour at Naga Public Market

April 24

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Strings of Soul and Michaelangelo at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 25

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Brown Republic at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Aretha and the Souled Out Band at Merk's

April 26

Moontrucks at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Dimsum at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 27

Abrakadabra at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Mocha at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 28

Kim Flores at the Ynares Center in Antipolo

Nyoy Volante at Metropolis Star Alabang; 7 p.m.

RJ 'n Friends with the Members Band at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

9th Avenue at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Acoustic Jive at Merk's

April 29

Kim Flores at the Mr. Golf Driving Range in Pampanga

Mr. God and Company at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Nyoy Volante at Cuba Libre Latin Bar, Starmall Edsa; 9 p.m.

Tribe of Levi at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Flintstones and the Gang at Merk's

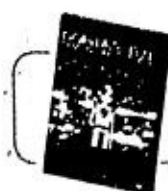
April 30

Douglas Nierras Powerdance in "Powerdancing in the Dark" at the Meralco Theater Shamrock at Metropolis Star Alabang; 5 p.m.

AiAi Delas Alas' Maggi Magic Sarap Palengke Tour at La Paz Public Market and Jaro Plaza, Iloilo

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ALL IN THE FAMILY: (From left) Ayala Corp. chair emeritus Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto, chair and CEO and Fernando, president. The elder Zobel is confident the legacy of public trust is safe in his children's hands.



ZOBEL hopes the new Ayala Museum will help build pride in Philippine heritage and culture.

Renaissance man is just one of the boys

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

DON JAIME ZOBEL DE AYALA recalls that time in his youth when his family put him to work in a bulldozer, and he promptly made a mess of it.

The company had to redo all the streets he attempted to lay out.

"I lowered the boom too low and I was scraping more than I should," the 71-year-old Zobel remembers with a smile in an interview.

Fortunately, Zobel hardly made other missteps in his 49-year stint at the country's oldest conglomerate, which came to an emotional close last Friday when he presided over his 23rd and last annual stockholders' meeting as chair of Ayala Corp.

Zobel told the crowd that included his daughters, extended family, fellow directors, officers, employees and stockholders of Ayala that he could not have left at a better time, as he leaves with Ayala Corp. reporting its highest profit of P8.198 billion for 2005.

As he handed over the reins of the company to his sons, Jaime Augusto, who was elected chairman and chief executive officer, and Fernando, who takes over as president and chief operating officer of the company, he looks back at how much Ayala has changed from the time he came in as a 24-year-old in 1958.

Once very private company

Zobel joined what used to be a very private company that kept a low profile and shunned all publicity as executive assistant under the insurance division, fresh from Harvard University where he earned his bachelor's degree in Architectural Science.

"They put me at the training section of the insurance companies. That was the more serious part of my earlier years," Zobel says.

"I joined the class and then became an instructor. That was my launch. That was really where I started being just one of the boys," Zobel explains.

Being one of the boys comes easily to Zobel, who, possessed with an artist's heart and a businessman's brain, takes a genuine interest in people and values their opinion.

Zobel was just getting comfortable with his corporate duties, under the guidance of his cousin Enrique and uncle Joseph McMicking, when he was offered the post of ambassador to the Court of St. James and the Scandinavian countries from 1970-1975.

He was 36 and his wife, Bea, was 34.

"There was a big debate in the family whether I should, whether I shouldn't. I think they debated it and they said, well, a man should be kind of a man for all seasons," Zobel says.

To London to meet queen

He went to London to meet the queen twice and was immediately brought back to earth when he was put in charge of Filipinas Life, the industrial life company known today as Ayala Life, which also dealt with low premium policies.

"Bea and I found ourselves coming from the Court of St. James and talking to the queen to really talking to the jeepney driver, the housewife. That was a contrast," Zobel says.

Zobel's career took a major turn in 1984 when he was elected chair and chief executive officer of Ayala, following the resignation of his cousin, Enrique, which many believe was prompted by a falling out with their aunt, Mercedes, McMicking's wife and the matriarch of the Zobel family who holds a significant block of shares in Ayala Corp.

One of the first things Zobel changed was the way people went about their work.

He preferred specialists to generalists, and wanted everybody to be accountable for their deeds.

RENAISSANCE/B2



FIRST JOB for Fernando (extreme left) was at Ayala Land

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AyalaLand

Renaissance man is just one of the boys

WHEN JZA returned from his studies at Harvard, Makati was emerging as the Philippines' business and commercial hub



ZOBEL trusted the officers he placed in leadership positions and communicated openly with them.

From page B1

"At that time, I think it was a trend to make everybody a generalist. Well, I countered that," Zobel says, "I said, if we're going to make people responsible and find out what they're worth, we have to put them in line, and it worked."

"I trusted the people I appointed and although I was closely following what they were doing, they were very talented and very

supportive. We started off in a new era so everybody was kind of gung ho. It was the new dawn," Zobel adds.

Ayala Corp. was not the only institution entering a new era, so was the Philippines, which was caught in a political upheaval that would culminate in the February 1986 revolution that deposed Marcos.

Zobel made the decision to take an active role during those heady days, which was unprecedented in the company and family whose policy it was to stay away from politics.

"This was a time when you knew that you had to be political. There was no other way," he explains.

Zobel is not afraid to make such bold decisions, and this trait enabled the company to evolve from a firm rooted in traditional businesses, such as sugar, into what it is today—a highly diversified company with interests in real estate, telecommuni-



FIRST job for Jaime Augusto (right) was at Pure Foods.



ZOBEL is also an accomplished photographer

cations, banking, water distribution and semiconductors.

Ayala Corp.'s net income reflected the expansion, from P160 million in 1983 to over P8 billion last year.



ZOBEL (middle) with sons during the early years of their training

The new chairman emeritus of Ayala, however, is quick to add that he did not accomplish these landmark feats alone.

Credit to wife Bea

"The Ayala of today is not the legacy of one man. It is not my place to claim that. It is, however, the legacy of one family, and by family, I mean the extended family of stakeholders that stand with the company," he says.

He gives credit to his wife, with whom he says he makes a great team.

"She can make something out of nothing. That's her great trait," he says.

A big part of the credit also goes to his "family" of professionals put in charge of the many businesses that Ayala is into.

They are given enough room to blossom because of the trust that Zobel puts in them, especially his two sons who now have the solemn task of moving the country's fourth largest conglomerate in terms of revenues into another era.

To think that Jaime Augusto and Fernando—who also went to Harvard University—initially did not even want to work for Ayala, striking fear in the heart of their father.

Fernando, he says, wanted to explore Brazil thinking that Brazil was a land of promise. Jaime, on the other hand, went to work for a bank in France.

"I said a little bit like what my father said, come back. But I gave them the freedom. I said, if after a year you feel that you still want to go on your own then....," Zobel

says, "And I said, dear God, give me the light that they may want to come back."

Sons return

They came back and never left, much to the relief of their parents who are proud of how they turned out.

"Jaime has brought his own style, Fernando has brought his own style, and I don't interfere with that. As chairman, I was there more for guidelines. The three of us get along beautifully, and we again have a consultative approach," he says.

"If they had been disasters, I would have been horrified, saddened," he adds.

Zobel can still rest easy as the two brothers have always been—and still are—very close, both at the personal and professional levels, which should serve them well as together they take the Ayala group to the next level.

He sees the Ayala group changing yet again, in the same way it evolved under his watch.

Public trust

But some things will remain the same, such as maintaining the public's hard-earned trust in Ayala's products and services—a principle that has been handed down to today's seventh generation of Zobel at the helm of the conglomerate.

"If we are successful, it's because people trust us," Zobel says. "They buy a car and they know that the car works. They buy a piece of land and they know that land will appreciate.... Trust is the most important thing in the world."

Confident that the legacy of trust is safe in his children's hands, Zobel now contemplates his new life out of Ayala, although he remains as chair of the family corporation that owns 60 percent of Ayala Corp. and Ayala Foundation and widely expected to continue pursuing his other career in photography.

"[My plan is to] retire gracefully... I set goals shorter now than what I used to do before," Zobel says. "I'm thinking in terms of five years and five years... renewable."

"It's been a good life," he adds.

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From dire straits to P100M in assets

Abra's biggest coop touches lives of teachers, employees

By Artha Kira Paredes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BANGUED, ABRA—A FEW YEARS ago, Abra's biggest cooperative was standing on shaky grounds.

The Abra Diocesan Teachers and Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Adtempco) was suffering heavy losses because, according to its general manager Irene Bringas, members loaned money and ignored their responsibility in repaying these.

"A debt is a debt but some members thought that they were excused from paying because they were poor," Bringas says in Ilocano.

The cooperative also had other problems.

In 1993, the cooperative's money was left idle in the bank because only a few were applying for loans. In 1994, instead of making additional profits for the cooperative, the consumer store it set up suffered losses.

Pura Sumangil, an Adtempco director, says the cooperative was in such a financial crisis in 1996 that there were heavy withdrawals of savings deposits among its members.

But thanks to the realization of its members that a cooperative is a business undertaking and not a charitable institution, Adtempco now has 1,924 members and has its own building in this capital town.

Bringas says 7.7 percent of the cooperative's members are overseas workers.

Adtempco's four-story building houses the cooperative's grocery store on the ground floor, offices on the second floor, a session hall on the third floor and lodging area on the fourth floor.

The retraining of staff and their participation in cooperative management seminars paid off as Adtempco's assets reached P109.4 million as of September 2005.

Improving lives

Nelly Dizon, an Adtempco member for five years now, says she and her family owed their two houses (one in Bangued and one in Nueva Ecija) and a Starex van to the cooperative.



ADTEMPCO's P7-million four-story building came from Sectoral Representative Cresente Paez's P500,000 CDF and the cooperatives' building fund.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dizon, 47, a fish supplier at the Bangued public market, and her four children are proving their devotion to the cooperative by investing all their savings in Adtempco.

Dizon, says she trusts the cooperative to take care of her money, says Adtempco grants up to P500,000 in business loans under a flat interest rate of 18 percent per annum.

Bringas says the P500,000 loan is payable within a year when loaned for business purposes and payable in two years for providential loans.

Bringas says Adtempco has helped improve the lives of people from diverse backgrounds—catechists, teachers,

storeowners, market vendors and small businesses.

Church workers like catechists contribute a lower capital share of P150 monthly (half of the P300 monthly share capital of regular members) because of their "very minimal allowances," says Bringas.

But she says those who pay lower capital shares get the same privileges as regular members.

Members could loan up to 75 percent of their capital share without collateral. The amount of loan could be four times a member's share or it could depend on a member's capacity to pay.

Other benefits include grocery, appliance and emergency loans with the same interest rate of 18

percent per annum. Assistance is also given to heirs of deceased members.

About 70 percent of the members are women because, according to Bringas, most teachers who comprise the bulk of their members, are women.

Founders

Seventy-four employees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Bangued founded the cooperative when they established the Abra Diocese Teachers and Employees Credit Cooperative (Adtecco, Adtempco's predecessor) on Dec. 22, 1985.

Sumangil says they founded the cooperative to help local teachers and employees "pool their little money as capital for lending purposes and thus address their economic and financial needs."

With a seed capital of P152,361.59 (P110,000 of which came from the Divine Word Missionaries), Adtecco started operations in February 1986.

Without an office and regular staff, Adtecco's operations were placed under the Diocesan School Office headed by Fr. Ambrose Ponce, SVD.

Benjamin Ulamino, DSO secretary, managed the cooperative's operations. He became the first president and general manager of the cooperative.

It was only in 1987 that the cooperative rented its own office space and started employing regular staff members.

In 1992, Adtecco became a multi-purpose cooperative and its name was changed into Adtempco. Assets reached P1.25 million from 1987 to 1989, P11 million in 1996, P69 million in 2003 and P93 million in 2004.

In the cooperative's early years, its board members were not given honoraria but were served snacks during meetings as a "token" for their services to the cooperative, Sumangil said.

She said before 1998, members were restricted to diocesan workers but the membership was liberalized to include any Abra resident "with visible means of income [and whose membership was] approved by the board of directors."

All these farmers needed...

From page B4

The agrarian reform community (ARC) also known as Guio-ang, is about 90 km from the provincial capital city of Tagbilaran. One can reach the ARC by boarding jeepneys that ply the highways and municipal roads or by taking single motorcycles known as "habal-habal" to go to the mountainous areas.

There are scarcely any major nonfarm livelihood opportunities available to the ARC residents. Some maintain sari-sari stores, while others owned motorcycles for hire.

DAR, through its Philippine-Australia Technical Support for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (PATSAARD) Programme, had earlier appraised and analyzed existing conditions in Bohol and the ARCs. Its Team had identified banana production as a potential enterprise. After all, the many rolling areas provided good drainage, and its soil was ideal for bananas. The present volume of production could only meet 2.4 percent of the allocated demand. More importantly, there was a local cooperative that was capable of undertaking the project.

Planning for the business

To start the ball rolling, the DAR-PATSARRD helped establish a communal farm to produce part of the banana output and to serve as a demonstration area where the farmers could gain experience. This was to be supplemented by produce coming from the backyards of cooperative members.

Around the same time, the DAR-PATSARRD got in touch with the People's Fair Trade Assistance Center (PFTAC), a nongovernment organization in Tagbilaran City. PFTAC sourced bananas in Bohol for Alter Trade Corp. Philippines (ATCP), which was based in Negros and a direct trading partner of Alter Trade Japan. PFTAC also knew enough of local conditions as it promoted the technology for organic bananas among local cooperatives and small entrepreneurs.

Subsequently, DAR personnel trained the cooperative's officers on organizational readiness to prepare them for the project. This included formulating and installing policies, systems and procedures for operating the banana enterprise.

For the farmer-participants of GMPCI, the DAR-PATSARRD collaborated with PFTAC to conduct a season-long training program. Two members committed a total of 8,000 sq. m. of their land to be used for demonstration, with 30 percent of the harvest going to them and 70 percent to the cooperative. A total of 1,200 suckers (shoots) of bongan were planted and cultivated by coop members, bayanihan style. At the same time, ten participants each received 100 banana suckers to plant in their own farms.

The DAR-PATSARRD followed these with several exposure trips, one of which led to a three-year marketing agreement, wherein ATCP would buy substantial volumes of organic bananas from GMPCI provided these pass its quality standards.

Operating in earnest

Functionally, the enterprise had four components: Production, trading, post-harvest packing and marketing.

Production. To satisfy the Japanese consumers' preference for organically grown bananas, they had to use: organic, instead of inorganic, commercial fertilizers; mulching and manual weeding; and botanical, instead of chemical-based, herbicides and pesticides.

Trading. At the farm level, the buyers must wear cloth gloves and should hold the banana at the crown portion when making their inspection. Bongan bananas are sorted and selected based on the quality specifications. Only those that pass the product standards will be bought by GMPCI.

Post-harvest packing. Bananas from GMPCI farms and elsewhere are brought to the center for quality control and packing. Packing is done every first and third Wednesdays of the month, following ATCP's quality control process.

Upon entering the packing center, packers wear rubber boots, apron, hairnets and cloth gloves. Each section of the operation has clearly-delineated work areas and tables with indigenous cushions. The packers clean the packing center and its surroundings a day before the operation, and they also do the same after.

Marketing. From the packing center in the ARC, the finished cartons are trucked to the seaport of Tagbilaran City, these are brought by boat to Manila. These are then transferred to a refrigerated van which is then loaded to an international ship for Japan.

At one time Alter Trade Corp. Japan returned batches of boxed bananas, including one from GMPCI, because it found a sticker of a Mindanao company known for exporting inorganically grown bananas in one of the boxes. As a result, a Japanese expert came over to Guio-ang ARC to check whether or not the bananas from GMPCI were naturally grown as reported. When it was confirmed that the banana with the sticker did not come from the ARC, shipments of Guio-ang bananas resumed.

Although the project is still in its infancy, Vic Jurlano and Aris Portugal, both of PATSAARD, agree that it appears headed for success.

Several factors make them optimistic: A market niche and a local partner, a strong community organization and government support.

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All these farmers needed was a helping hand

By Salvador I. Sibayan
Contributor U.P. Institute for
Small-Scale Industries

GUINDULMAN, BOHOL—STAN-filco, Philippine Packing, Lapan-day, AMS, Global Fruits, Delta Farms. What do these companies have in common? Hundreds of hectares planted to bananas and exports of the golden fruit. These firms are among the major players in the country, employing hundreds of workers.

But there's a relatively new comer—the Guio-ang Multi-Pur-

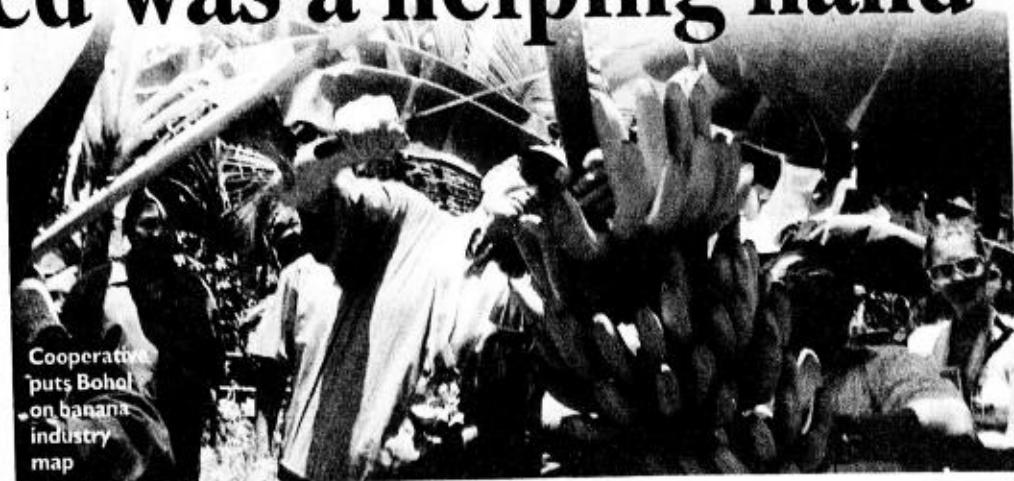
pose Cooperative Inc. in Guindulman, Bohol. Total area planted: 1.8 hectares. Total number of farmers: ten, each one tilling 1,000 sq. m. planted to bananas. Total number of workers: 17, of which 15 are involved in packing and 2 in purchasing. Type of banana exported: organic bongan, an indigenous and naturally grown variety characterized by its aromatic, yet sweet-sour taste. The largest reported shipment? 676 kg, and counting.

Not much compared to the big boys, but quite an accomplish-

ment for a bunch of farmers.

Banana, mostly of the Cardava variety, ranks third among the food crops grown in Guindulman, where 330 ha are planted to it. There isn't a single barangay in the municipality where banana isn't grown. In terms of area cultivated and volume of production, the most predominant crop produced in the ARC is rice, which is largely rainfed. Minor crops aside from bananas are: Coconuts, peanuts, corn, root crops and a variety of fruits.

ALL THESE/B3



Season of Change at Manila Pavilion Hotel

Diverse, versatile, and most of all, timeless. The season of change has landed upon Manila Pavilion Hotel as it launches a new restaurant of interactive nature - SEASONS. And just like the climate changes that befall upon us year after year, Seasons is here to stay.

This new coffee shop, located at Manila Pavilion Hotel's ground floor, is divided into areas that represent the seasons found in the earth's temperate regions: winter, spring, summer and fall. But don't be mislead; Seasons' appeal is worldwide as it covers an international fare that mostly features dishes of Filipino, Italian, French, Greek, Chinese, Japanese, and American origin.

Stepping in Seasons, guests can distinguish easily the symbolic divisions in the restaurant. The dining area fronting the entrance, as well as the rightmost corner beside it, is autumn. Here, one finds exhibit walls bearing tree trunk-like posts and furniture in brown and pale yellow shades. Autumn also serves as the common area where diners can fully view the artistry of Seasons.

Across autumn is a bright and cozy nook. A quick glance at its backdrop - a pocket garden filled with bamboo shoots and water flowing freely in cascades - makes one realize instantly that this area is summer. The bar at its side completes that carefree summer feel when the sun is at its hottest and fun activities are in full swing.

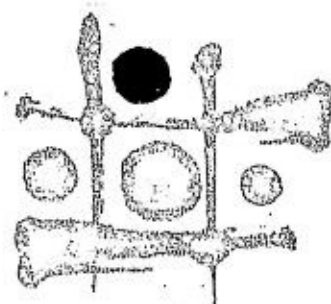
Seasons is also made up of several rooms located at its corners. Just beside Seasons' entrance are three private rooms with lively green paintings and fresh floral fabrics. This area depicts the time when nature comes alive; when plants and trees sprout new leaves, flowers bloom and daylight hours become longer. It's none other than spring! These three private rooms each have a capacity of 10-12 persons. Collapsible dividers have been installed to turn it into one big function room.

At the far end of the restaurant, the cold, crisp feel of winter comes alive, what with the room's blue paintings and snowflake-like chandeliers.

Of course, who can ignore the four buffet stations situated at the center of the restaurant? These four are the hot, cold, soup & dimsum and pastry stations where guests can see the chefs cook dishes right before their eyes. This is what makes Seasons interactive.

"The new line of coffee shop with interactive stations evolved three or four years ago, where dishes are prepared in front of the guests," relays Manila Pavilion Hotel's Executive Chef Nicholas Anderson. "Seasons serves a wide variety throughout breakfast, lunch, and dinner and caters to all diners looking for good value for money. Seasons also features appetizers, salads, barbecues, paella, fresh seafoods, halo-halo bar, French pastries, as well as sushi and sashimi prepared by an expert, Japanese-trained chef. This interactive concept will satisfy demand of clientele as we give them better value with better variety."

Seasons is open daily from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 m.n.



SEASONS

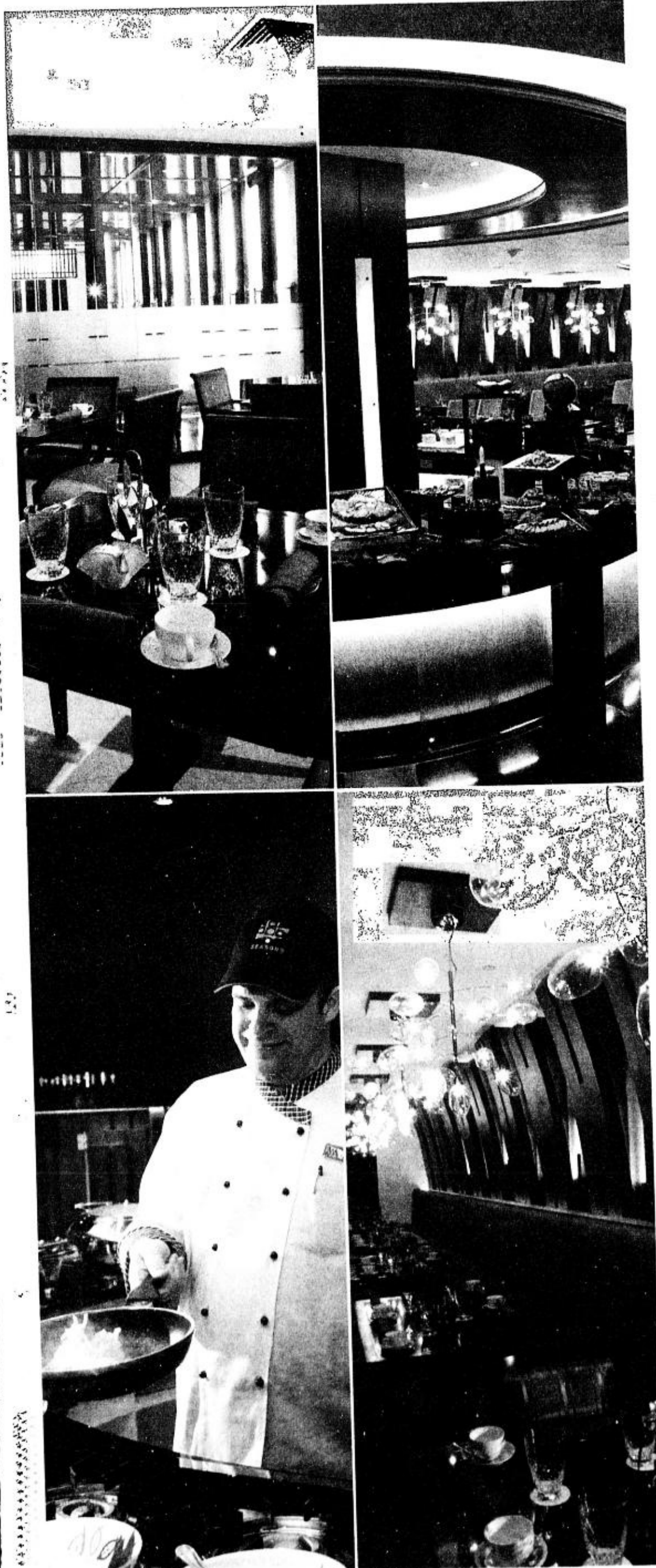
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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

ArtiSta. Rita revives the music of the Kapampangan for the hip-hop generation



CELEBRATING Kapampangan culture, the ArtiSta. Rita performs a wide variety of music down by Porac River. PHOTOS: JIM GUANO PINZALAN

Songs for my mother

By Chelo Banal-Formoso

THAT SATURDAY THAT I SAT BY the Porac river watching the ArtiSta. Rita mini-concert, I had never missed my mother more. Song after Kapampangan song, I thought of how much she would have enjoyed herself had she joined us. But that morning she woke up feeling a lot out of sorts, so I didn't protest when she decided to stay home. I should have insisted she come along, I kept thinking to myself, for how to wrap up this wonderful experience and bring it home to her? How do I translate the feelings of exhilaration and renewal all around and within me into mere words? How do I thank her for giving me a Kapampangan soul and for raising me around a language that is both rhythmical and consoling?

I had wondered if my mother had

heard the songs before. "Atin ku pung Singing" everybody knows, but what about the others? I got the answer when the next morning I played the two ArtiSta. Rita CDs I bought for her. She made comments like "This is a balse" or "This is like a zarzuela." She sang along, swayed her head, tapped her foot and, I suppose, journeyed back to a sunny place in her heart that she deemed not worth sharing with any of her nine children until now.

"Oh that song," she said in Kapampangan, amused as the opening strains of "Aro!" played. "My mother's friends in the market would start singing it whenever they saw us coming. They would tease me about being flat-nosed and dark-skinned. It would make your grandma so mad she'd grab and toss the stuff they were selling." (For the record, my mother outgrew the flat nose, retained her gorgeous

tan and turned out to be a very attractive woman. All her friends say not one of her six daughters could hold a candle to her beauty—but what do they know?)

My grandmother, Catalina Gozum, was a tall, big-boned woman. In my mind I pictured a market scene where a woman with my built and my temper was overturning tables, causing fruits and veggies and other wares to fly all over the place. We called my mom's mother Apo, which is Kapampangan for "grandparent" and quite the opposite of the Tagalog word apo (accent on the second syllable) for "grandchild." I was my grandma's pet until my brother Joel was born and upstaged me. Apo died when I was on my senior year in college, but I remember her face vividly. It is not true that time washes out the color and details of your memories, at least not with me.

And yet I honestly had not thought

about my Apo in years until I heard the ArtiSta. Rita songs. It was on trips with my grandmother that I got to be familiar with a few Pampango folk songs included in the "Kapampangan Ku" CD. I spent my childhood summers vacationing with my Apo in Betis and San Luis, Pampanga and in Tarlac, Tarlac. Betis because that was her hometown (her mother is a Serrano, her father, a Gozum); San Luis because that was where her eldest son Facundo lived after marrying Filomena of the Carlos family; and Tarlac because that was where she settled down upon marriage to my grandfather Atilano Rojas (of the Guarin and Rojas families of Arayat).

Dramatic settings

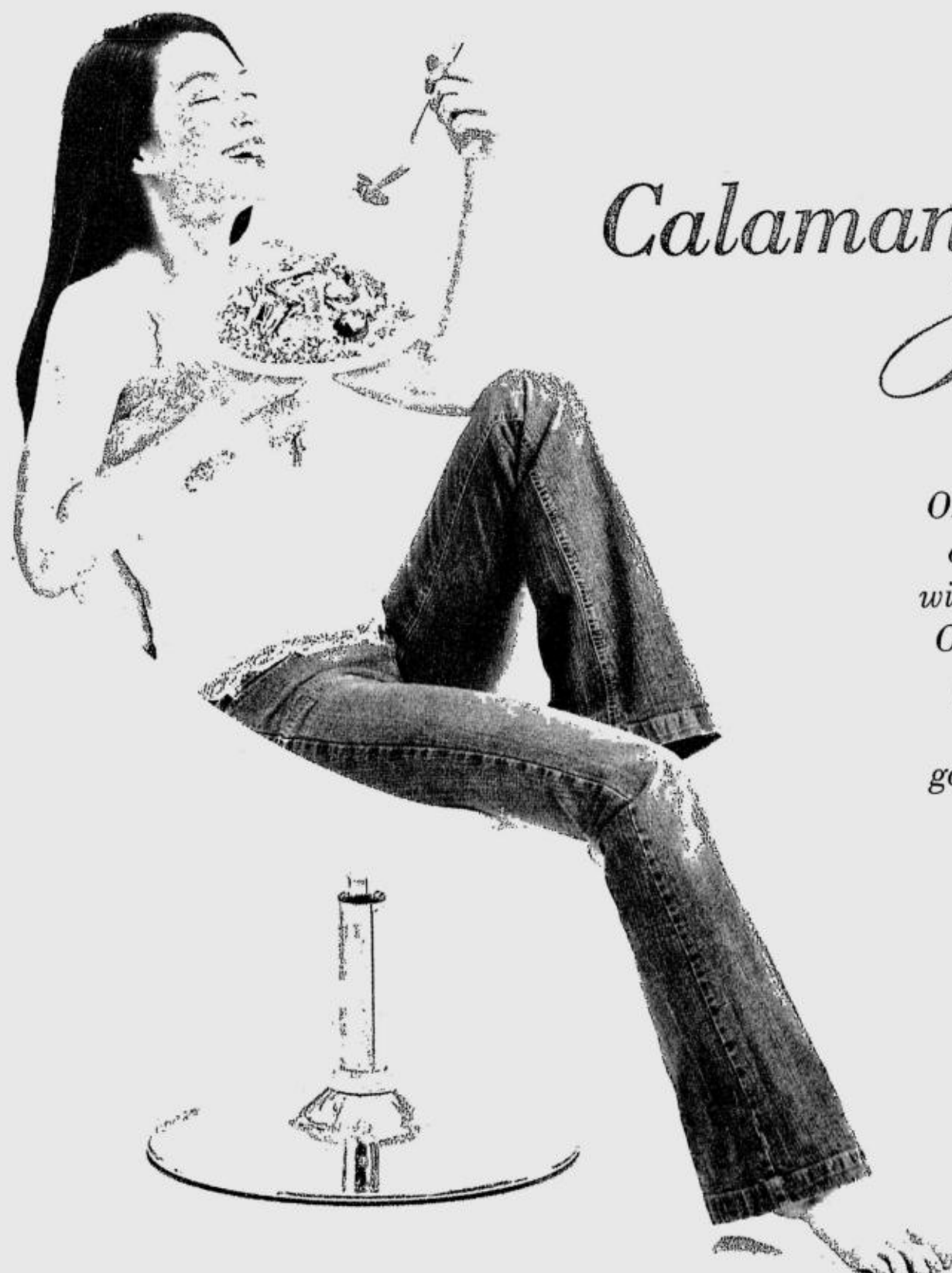
While the ArtiSta. Rita have yet to perform in the market where my grandmother toppled tables, they have held concerts in equally dramatic settings. Most of their

concerts are held with a landmark as background. One year they performed by an old villa owned by the Guanzons. Another year it was at the two-century-old San Guillermo Church in Bacolor. For us, it was by a river.

"Muritan mu," said my cousin Belle Aleta, a balikbayan from Vienna and daughter of the aforementioned Facundo and Filomena, when she invited me to the impromptu show. Murit is Kapampangan for "crazy" so no one expected a serious performance with live orchestra, lights and the works. It was understood that it was all going to be just for fun, a dress rehearsal kinda but with a river running through it.

Ambiance is very important to Andy Alviz, the group's creative director. "You save on the cost of the set. The ambiance is there right away, and at the same time

SONGS/C4



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the Supermeat



TALENTED siblings Ogie, Tony and Gigi Alcasid



RICCO Renzo manager Kaye Nuguid, artists Gerry Ingco and Paulino Garcia Jr.



PINAYS in WOFS class. Miss Bicolandia '91 Lois Alog, Malaysia-based Sandy McCrea, Qatar-based Perla Virly, Sea Princess and Rosan Cruz with wishing balloons

Legally blonde, thanks to feng shui

MALAYSIA IS INDEED "truly Asia!" It's an amazingly progressive place, with its harmonious mix of Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures. From one's arrival in the new, state-of-the-art Kuala Lumpur International Airport to entering the city through super-wide, eight-lane highways or the 28-minute KLIA Express Train, one cannot help but be astonished at the advancement of this Asian nation.

Rainforest jungles in the middle of its capital, Kuala Lumpur, share the same limelight as the impressive skyline created by key buildings like the Petronas Twin Towers and KL Tower. Although Islam is the state religion, Malaysians enjoy complete freedom of worship so the city landscape also has mosques, temples and churches sharing common neighborhoods.

My weeklong visit to KL was not to watch the Formula 1 races (although I would have loved to visit Sepang) or to savor its diverse range of gastronomic ethnic cuisine or to shop in the land of Jimmy Choo (yes! He is Malaysian).

Instead, together with my Bikram yoga buddy Rosan Cruz, I went there to attend the Master Practitioners Course in Feng Shui (www.wofs.com) taught by Lillian Too, the world's best-selling feng shui author.

I got hooked during her Feng Shui Extraganza talk in Manila early this year. World of Feng Shui (WOFS) Philippines franchise owner Marites Allen introduced me to Lillian, and I soon arranged to take her course.

The WOFS flagship store in Podium (tel. 9147888) had most of its products sold out after the session, but I started reading up Lillian's books that dealt with interiors. I highly recommend her book, "Declutter Your Home." She has great tips on how to create harmony by channeling chi or energy into the home and decorating with not-too-Chinese-looking remedies.

Aside from her WOFS branch in SM Cebu (tel. 2314088), Marites will soon open her newest shop in Mall of Asia next month. With all the products I bought to share with all my friends from the different animal signs of the Chinese zodiac, I might as well franchise a shop from her.

Living practice

Feng Shui is a living practice and not a religious one. It's a study of energies and tapping these energies to live harmoniously with existing forces. With good beliefs like practicing with sincerity and having a good heart, feng shui truly works with whatever religion one practices.

TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes



This year, the Year of the Fire Dog, Lillian Too says it is auspicious to put gold on the head



MALAYSIAN host George Hashim enjoys a flavored water pipe

Our class was so diverse, with participants from all over the world including Russia, Venezuela and Germany, to name a few. One of the Russians works here in the Philippines and can say a few Tagalog words. There were seven Pinays but only three from Manila. The rest came from as far as Qatar and the US.

The intense course was quite scientific, with precise compass readings and chart analyses to master. I still need a lot of training with proper remedies and auspicious recommendations. All I remember offhand is that the best direction for Period 8 (February 2004 onwards) is Southwest or its sub-direction Northeast. This only means that it is favorable—if one is considering buying a home—to position your main door facing these directions.

Platinum highlights

Lillian also recommended that for this year, the Year of the Fire Dog, it is auspicious to put gold on the head, meaning becoming a blonde is in! So right after I arrived home, I headed to my favorite hair place, Emphasis Salon, for master stylist Victor Ortega to make me legally blonde.

With my new platinum highlights, my ultra-dry hair needed intense hair treatment, so a week later, nourishment was supplied by Kerastase Instituté at Salon ESA, 6750 Retail Arcade (tel. 8190886). Picked up by a chauffeured BMW, I got the full-service treatment starting with a hair and scalp diagnosis. The machine magnifies the scalp and hair a hundred times and checks the condition of the roots and ends. Even before the analysis, I knew my oily scalp and dry hair needed a vital lift.

Kerastase Institute owner Ed Angeles told me that aside from daily conditioning, it is necessary for colored hair to have a Vita-Ciment treatment at least once every two weeks. If golden hair will bring wealth luck, I might as well take better care of my hair.

Gold leafing

Gold in artwork is also recommended. The ongoing exhibit in the Ricco Renzo Galleries & Caffé, at LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St., Makati, has the works of mixed media artist Tony Alcasid, older brother of popular singer Ogie. The technique of his gold leafing on his acrylic work demonstrates a form of worship and spirituality. Do check his exhibit titled "Textures & Landscapes" together with Paulino Garcia Jr. and Gerry Ingco.

To attain feng shui luck a hundredfold, the key is to do charitable work because whenever you share your blessings, more will be returned. There are numerous programs out there that help the less privileged, but one of the most successful ones is Gawad Kalinga. I have had several instances where I have helped construct a house through a bayanihan activity and it was such a fulfilling experience.

The Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA) recently linked up with Gawad Kalinga and pooled not only funds but also top executives' time and effort to help the Ati com-



PHILIPPINE art expert Ino Manalo and gorgeous Lucy Torres



WORLD of Feng Shui shoppers in Kuala Lumpur



MASTER practitioners' class graduation photo in Lillian Too's home



CREATIVE Firma Makati owners Ricky Toledo and Chito Vijandre



FENG shui expert Chris Yeo and pretty wife Jennifer Too



BUSINESS guru Wash SyCip flanked by Too Wan Jin and WOFS owner Lillian Too



KUNDIRANA boys Fr. Dennis Meim, Tony Alcasid, Dingdong Eduque and Robert Arambulo



KERASTASE Institute and L'Oreal PR manager Angelique Villaraza, INQUIRER's Kinny Salas and Salon ESA owner Ed Angeles

munity in Montalban, Rizal. Led by insurance commissioner Evangeline Escobillo and PLIA president Peter Coyiuto, the company dedicated 35 housing units. This contribution to the country's socioeconomic development will help alleviate poverty a little at a time.

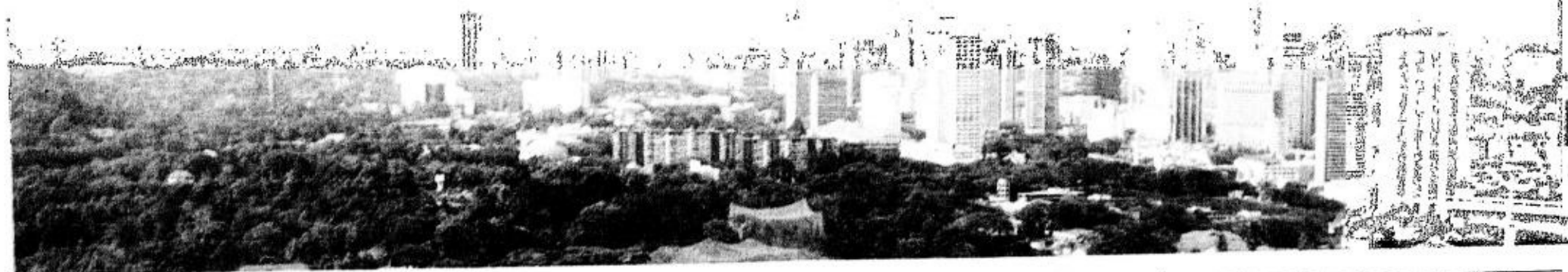
Mayor Pedro Cuervo of Rodriguez donated the land on which the units are built. With government and nongovernment working together, an indigenous group of hunters and gatherers from Panay Island will now have roofs over their heads.

Although life insurance companies provide

financial support to life's uncertainties, PLIA head Coyiuto explained that his company has taken the initiative to help improve lives by being of service to those that cannot return the favor.

Feng shui can only be effective if charitable works are done. And if one adds fervent prayers and intentions into the mix, then many bountiful blessings will surely come one's way.

E-mail me at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph.



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PLIA treasurer Gregorio D. Marcado; vice president Esther C. Tan; president Peter G. Coyuito; insurance commissioner Evangelina Escobillo; Rodriguez, Mayor Pedro Cuervo; past president José L. Cuisia Jr. Second row: Manulife's Jose Maria Ignacio, Prulife UK's Belle Tiongco and Lope Garde Jr., PLIA director Jose C. Lee, general manager Sylvia D. Amansec, Grepalife's Reynaldo Soto, United Life's Lydia Lim and Benjamin Lim, GK youth volunteer from La Salle Greg Mercado



EVANGELINE Escobillo helps an ati girl carry a block.



PLIA chief Peter Coyuito of First Life and Gregorio Mercado of Phil. Prudential Life keep the bricks moving.

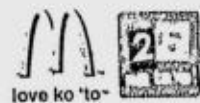
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CREATIVE director Andy Alviz escorts musical director Resy Pineda. Their original compositions are included in the ArtiSta. Rita CDs "Kapampangan Ku" and "Pamanuli," available in Cabalen restaurants.



AN AFTERNOON of Kapampangan songs courtesy of ArtiSta. Rita and, at dusk, a picnic of Kapampangan food courtesy of the choir members' families and ardent supporters

Songs for my mother

From page C1

you show the audience the beauty of Pampan-
ga," he says.

Andy owes his theatrical wisdom to his stints as choreographer of the Manila, Hong Kong and Singapore stagings of the Broadway hit "Miss Saigon." (Next month, he will be choreographing the Korean version.)

The young take to the old

According to Andy, children in Sta. Rita are not given to playing in the streets or goofing off in the fields. Instead, they form groups and sing. So in 2001, the Riteños thought of putting on a Christmas show where they would gather all the choirs. "We got together about 12 groups," he says. Young and old, male and female, they were all drafted for the show.

"That was when I realized there were very talented musical directors right in my home town," he adds, referring to Resy Pineda, Gie Lansang and Randy del Rosario.

The Artista. Rita Foundation, which has united the disparate singing groups of the town into one choir, is an offshoot of the 2001 concert. The concerts and the two CDs produced by Artista. Rita (a third one is in progress) have caused the renaissance of Kapampangan art and culture. They have also erased the usual notion that folk songs are only for old people.

"Young people in Pampanga are singing our songs now," says Andy with pride. Not just in Pampanga though. Since I brought home the ArtiSta. Rita CDs, my children and their cousins have taken to listening to Kapampangan music when the family gets together for Sunday lunch with my mother. They particularly love "Oya Na" and the other folk songs that have been given a rap twist.

Supporting ArtSIta. Rita are 150 volunteers, of which 70 are performers, ranging in age from 5 to 70. The bulk are in their 20s. Grants for the recordings and the upkeep of the choir have come from "Miss Saigon" producer Cameron McIntosh and his foundation, Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid, the Holy Angel University and the Oasis Hotel, as well as donations from appreciative Kapampangans.

Through their performances and recordings, the Sta. Rita artists have inspired hordes of their *cabalen* to rediscover their roots. Alice Castro, who owns popular restaurant Holidayland in San Fernando, has seen two shows and doesn't mind going to another. But it's the *balikbayans* who are most affected emotionally by the ArtSta. Rita show.

"We were not sure people would like the show," says Andy, "but we thought it might be like 'Field of Dreams,' you know, if you build it they will come. And it's been like that so far. People have come up to me and said, 'We came home from Australia or Hawaii or Canada to watch the show.'"

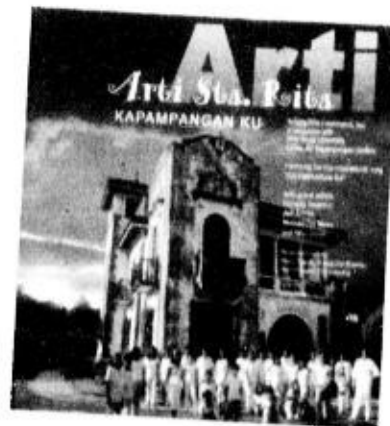
Last December, all the grand matriarchs of Pampanga's leading families supposedly came to Sta. Rita for the Duman Festival, which was made doubly attractive by an ArtiSta. Rita concert.

The ArtiSta. Rita's music will be coming 'round the mountain on Easter Sunday, April 16, when they put on a sunset show at the Solman Ayala Farmhaus, which is nestled at the foot of Mt. Aravat.

I have promised my mother I will take her,
and I will, come rain or high lahar.

To get to Mt. Arayat from the North Expressway, take the Angeles exit, go toward Magalang all the way to Pampanga Agricultural College. Then follow the road that leads to Ayala and Sto. Nino. Venue is five minutes away from PAC. Tickets will be sold at the gate but it's best to reserve. Call 0917-8012687 or 0920-9024433.

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Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel



SAN ISIDRO
Labrador Church, Pulilan

Journey for spiritual renewal is also a trip back in time

Story on Page D2



BASILICA Minore de Inmaculada Concepcion, Malolos

Ateneo La Salle, UP

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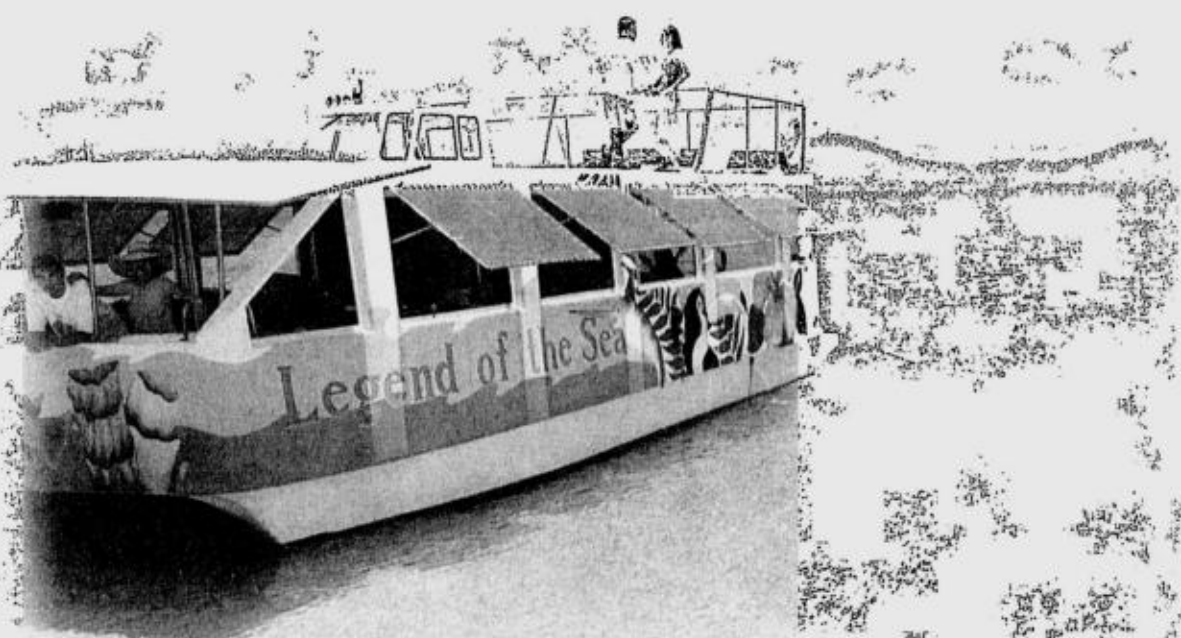
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BARASOAIN Church, Malolos



SIDE entrance to St. John the Baptist Church, Calumpit



IMAGE of Santiago Apostol in stained glass

The traditional *visita iglesia* this Holy Week can be the start of a voyage of discovery of the province of Bulacan

Journey for spiritual renewal is also a trip back in time

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao
Photos by Jerome C. Dumlao

FOR MOST FILIPINOS, HOLY Week is a time for either recharging a troubled spirit or going out of town for a much-needed break from the frenetic pace of the city.

In the historic and culture-rich province of Bulacan, one can actually do both by visiting some grand churches spread across the province's quaint towns.

It will only take a few hours of your time and cost you a few hundred pesos, including the expressway toll fee, gasoline and *pasalubong*, like fluffy *ensaymadas* or sweet, fresh watermelons.

Set off early, take the North Luzon Expressway, and get off at the Tabang exit.

Just a few kilometers away, past many roadside stores selling all kinds of ornamental plants, stands your first stop—Barasoain Church in Malolos.

The imposing structure that was on the back of the phased-out P10 bill is worth the visit, not only because of its grand design, but also because of its significance in Philippine history.

Historic

It was in this hallowed 121-year-old church that, on Sept. 29, 1898, the revolutionary Congress, with Pedro Paterno presiding, ratified the independence declared on June 12, 1898, by Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo in Kawit, Cavite.

The Congress buckled down to work on a constitution drafted by Felipe Calderon. On Jan. 21, 1899, it ratified the Malolos constitution, the first of its kind in Asia.

A marker on the right side of the church, just past the entrance, is the roster of congressmen that worked on the constitution. It is a who's who in politics at that time.



NATIONAL Shrine to St. Anne, Hagonoy

In the list were Pablo Ocampo, Leon Ma. Guerrero, Gregorio Aglipay, Leon Apacible, Benito Legarda and Gregorio Araneta, first secretary of the revolutionary congress.

The church's significance was not lost on deposed President Joseph Estrada who made the unprecedented move of taking his oath of office there in 1998, to mark 100 years of Philippine independence.

Next stop is the nearby Basílica Minore de Inmaculada Concepcion, which dominates the town square by sheer size and Marian blue hue.

It was here where General Aguinaldo, president of the first republic of the Philippines, held office from September 1898 to March 1899.

In front of the church is the over 100-year-old Kalayaan Tree that Aguinaldo himself planted.

After buying the famous Malolos *ensay-*

mada or plants and clay pots that the town is famous for, take the narrow but smooth country road to Paombong.

Vinegar producer

You'll know you're there when you see the many roadside stalls selling bottles of the famous milky-white vinegar that bears the town's name.

The main church here is the Santiago Apostol Church, its primary attractions being the small paintings by a local artisan depicting the 14 stations of the cross.

If you have time, visit the Kapitangan Catholic Chapel with its own stations of the cross.

Next to Paombong is Hagonoy, originally spelled Hagunuy as seen in the municipal hall.

Next to the town hall is the beautiful National Shrine to St. Anne, an imposing struc-

ture in old rose that is the quiet town's pride and joy.

The main doors are works of art in themselves. Go past them and it's like stepping back into the Spanish era.

The massive edifice does not lack for artwork, the painstaking efforts of long-dead artisans still evident on beams and ceilings.

Then there's the central altar decorated with gold leaf, a worthy setting for the revered figure of St. Anne.

The church was put up by the Augustinians in 1581 and was declared a national shrine to St. Anne in 1991, making it a must-see church for the country's legions of Marian devotees.

Calumpit's pride

Another required visit for those passing through Bulacan is the over 400-year-old St. John the Baptist Church in Calumpit.

Like most churches built in the 1500s, the stone church of St. John the Baptist is shaped like a cross with the bell tower as one of its main features.

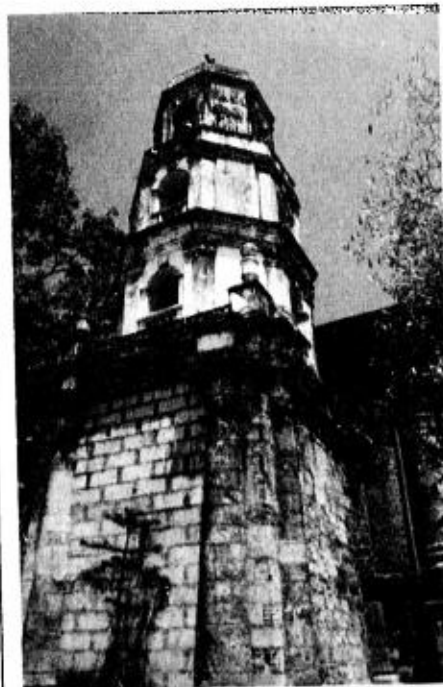
The interior invites contemplation and deep prayer due to the abundant use of dark wood in the church décor.

Giant chandeliers hanging from very high ceilings put that extra touch of elegance to Calumpit's treasure.

Last stop is the Church of San Isidro Labrador, the patron saint of farmers, in Pulilan. San Isidro was also the town's old name. Like most churches here, the Augustinians were the first to build the religious monument.

The church and the town take center stage on May 14 and 15 when the fiesta is celebrated in honor of the patron saint. It is highlighted by the famous Carabao Festival.

The traditional *visita iglesia* this Holy Week can be the start of the discovery of this province that is a welcome balm to the weary soul.



CALUMPIT Church bell tower

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More flights to LA

Korea's second flag carrier, Asiana Airlines, has increased connecting flights to Los Angeles. It now flies a total of seven flights from Manila, eight from Clark and six from Cebu to Los Angeles every week via its hub, the Incheon International Airport. The three additional flights leave Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and depart from Incheon at 8 p.m. Passengers arrive in Los Angeles International Airport at 2 p.m. the same day of their departure from Manila. Asiana Airlines also flies to San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago and New York. Call 8925688.

Flights to Paris doubled

Emirates, the Dubai-based international

airline, is offering double daily service to Paris, increasing both seat and cargo capacity. The airline currently operates 12 flights a week to Paris. The increase in number of flights will offer customers greater flexibility. The increase in flights is in response to greater demand for Emirates' services and products in France, which is an increasingly important market for the airline. The additional flights will be serviced by the 237-seat Airbus A330-200 aircraft, configured in three classes. Members of Skywards, Emirates' frequent-flyer program, can earn Skywards Miles when flying in any class between Dubai and Paris in either direction.

Haven for 'balikbayan' families

Balikbayan Filipinos have become part of Oakwood's guest roster throughout the year, instead of being just seasonal clients. Oakwood Premier Ayala Center general manager Robert Rosetti says the hotel is attractive to balikbayans because of its location within the Ayala mall making it convenient to go to shops, restaurants, cinemas and other services. Oakwood residences are self-contained with their own living area, entertainment center, full kitchen and laundry facilities. In response to balikbayan loyalty, Oakwood Premier Ayala Center offers local resident rates to returning Filipinos. By simply presenting their Philippine passports or Alien Certificates of Registration, they can avail of special rates.

Environmental camps

Island Caravan of Skoal Advertising Inc. will have an Environmental Summer Camps Program for students aged 16-21. Wild Green Summer, to be conducted a few hours away from Manila, in Sorso-gon, Agusan del Norte and Pangasinan, will be facilitated by local officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and other resource persons. The students will learn to appreciate and value the natural environment through activities like trekking, rappelling, kayaking, tree-planting and beach cleanups. The summer camps are also in cooperation with local government units, Depart-

ment of Tourism and local non-government organizations. Call 8961910 or 8967569. E-mail skoal@skyinet.net

Chinese officials visit Tagaytay

Officials of Zichuan Town in Shandong Province, East of Beijing, recently visited Tagaytay Highlands. SM Investment Corp. led by chair Henry Sy Sr., gave the Chinese guests led by Director Wang Shuhai a tour of the Highlands. The Chinese visitors were impressed with the uniqueness of the entire development, particularly of the all-Western red cedar log cabin

village, The Woodlands. Belle Corp., winner of the Best in Leisure Property Development award in the 23rd edition of the National Consumers Awards and People's Choice Awards, is the developer of Tagaytay Highlands, Midlands and Greenlands properties.

Marketing campaign for Puerto Galera

The Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines (STB-P) office has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the local government of Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro, for a joint marketing and promo-

tional project until June 15. The Island-to-Island (I2I) Initiative aims to promote the Lion City and Puerto Galera to both local and foreign tourists. Through the local tourism office, STB-P assisted in improving and dressing up Puerto Galera's boats bringing tourists from the port of Batangas City. The boats bear Enchanting Puerto Galera, Uniquely Singapore banners. The contract signing was attended by Aileen Bareng, municipal tourism officer; Puerto Galera Mayor Aristeo Atienza; Docker Cavestany, account executive of Nancy Harel and Associates, Inc., PR agency of STB-P.

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The Legend Palawan: In the center of things

City life swirls around The Legend Palawan in Puerto Princess, as vacation and convention groups arrive in big numbers. The hotel lobby is a frequent hubbub with departures and arrivals, handled graciously. The hotel is simply the happening place for everyone: families, conventioners and professionals, old and young alike, the laid-back or the adventurer, the shopping enthusiast or the culture and history buff. The Legend Palawan has access to an exciting cache of adventure-filled locations through The Legend Palawan Experience or PoK Tours.

Arrivals from Manila can still catch a hearty breakfast at the Tagalog Restaurant before inquiries at the Front Desk yield directions to the locations you wish to visit. Which one will it be?

There's practically a PoK Tour to nearly every site you may have in mind. There can be spur of the moment decisions as PoK Tours can be flexible but do give the programmed tours a try. Nearly every need is anticipated.

The Honda Bay island hopping tour is a typical favorite, with a speedboat ride or sail aboard the catamaran MB Legend of the Sea for the islands of Pandan, Luli, Soko, Mearn Martin, Starfish and Cowrie. Not island in white sight, where at day's end, thousands of bats wing their way out, flying in thick droves.

Honda Bay islands offer an experience even seniors can enjoy aboard the 60-foot catamaran which comes equipped with an audio-visual sound system, a bar and private restrooms. The young ones can hop on junks and take a few turns while or others can swim or snorkel. Fish feeding is also a fun activity with guests standing in waist deep clear water with pieces of bread in their hands for small fish to feed on.

For the invigilid, the islands can mean roughing it a bit and having picnic lunches. Overnight stays in tents are possible but only bare comforts are available.

Another tour is the firefly watching adventure. Groups are taken on speedboat rides into the mangrove areas. By nightfall, fireflies descend with their flickering lights decking the trees. People sit huddled and rapt, amazed at the number of fireflies which have all but disappeared in the big cities.

Water users finished, even conventioners can dash to the market for some quick shopping. The Puerto Princess market is remarkably clean, and offers more favorites which cost a pretty penny in Manila. Bachelors can check out indigenous craft shops, or opt for some food purchases, as well as dry merchandise.

Families, conventioners, teenagers and owners, or the very young and the very old, there's an activity for each of them in Puerto Princess, Palawan.

Look up the options at The Legend Palawan. Surely there's something for everyone there.

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Sinigang Belly Espesyal

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|-----|-------------|
| 1 | small pouch |
| 5-6 | cups |
| 2 | pcs |
| 2 | pcs |
| 1 | pc |
| 1 | pcs |
| 4 | pcs |
- tamarind soup powder
rice water
tomatoes, quartered
medium-sized onion, quartered
radish, sliced diagonally
SARANGANI BAY
BONELESS BANGUS
okra, cut into halves
kangkong, eggplant (optional)
salt to taste

PROCEDURE:

Boil the tamarind soup base in rice water. Upon boiling, add the tomatoes, onion, radish, and salt. When vegetables are nearly done, add the sliced fish, then boil until fish is done. Add the rest of the vegetables, then simmer until cooked.

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Fishing for Healthier Options: What fish can do for you.

Fish is a high-protein food that is lower in fat than any other source of animal protein, but is rich in heart-healthy Omega-3 that help regulate blood clotting and reduce fat build-up in the arteries.

Recent medical research shows that regular consumption of fish can lower the risk of hypertension, stroke and cardiac arrest. The American Heart Association recommends eating fish at least twice a week to help maintain cardiovascular health.

Fish oils can be beneficial in reducing the swelling from rheumatoid arthritis and can also be good for mental health. It helps in combating depression and lowers the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

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Sarangani Bay Fish Ponds in Alabell, Sarangani Province

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Alsons Aquaculture Corporation, the company behind Sarangani Bay, is the only fully integrated farm-to-market seafood processing facility in the country, where fish fry are hatched, grown, harvested, and processed on site. It is the only plant that meets the strictest international food safety standards, with its ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Standard, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) certifications. Sarangani Bay products get to your table at their freshest because fish are kept ice-cold at below 5°C from harvest throughout processing and stored at -18°C.

Named after the marine sanctuary it calls home, Sarangani Bay is the largest exporter of premium packaged fish to Filipinos in the US, Canada, Australia and Asia. It has received the country's most prestigious recognition for exporters, the Golden Shell Presidential Award for Excellence in Design Manufacturing and Marketing. Proof enough that when it comes to quality fish, Sarangani Bay makes sure that you and your family get only the prime catch of the day.



Visit www.sarangani-bay.com for bangus recipes.

Live-out retreats April 13-15

THE BRAHMA KUMARIS MEDITATION Centers nationwide will conduct "Peace of Mind," three half-day (9-11:30 a.m.) live-out retreats from Maundy Thursday to Black Saturday, April 13-15.

Holy week is the best time to explore and experience peace of

mind. It should be more than just a break from stressful and complicated life, but a time to seek true peace of mind through a better understanding of one's self.

Dadi Janki, 90, co-administrative head of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, an in-

ternational organization for self-development and spiritual renewal, says people can help create peace in the world by making themselves peaceful first.

Call the Brahma Kumaris center nearest you: Makati (8907960, 8907906), Quezon City (9229231,

4149421), Manila (5212015), Baguio (445-5935), Naga (4730622), Davao (2286052).

E-mail manila@ph.bkwsu.org. For two-and-a-half-day live-in retreat, call Tagaytay (046)413-2128 or e-mail tagaytay@kw-su.org. Visit www.bkwsu.org.

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A wide array of fashion accessories are also available at marked-down prices.

The exhibit offers a selection of artworks and craft items as well as delicacies and dishes from different regions.

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A FORMAL garden's symmetry is achieved with a pond in the middle and identical details on both sides.

Text by Linda B. Bolido
Photos by Rev. Basil Ma. Apostol, OSB

HIDDEN BEHIND THE TALL walls of San Beda College (SBC) on Mendiola, a few meters away from Malacañang, is a bit of Italian scenery.

With its decades-old trees creating a dense canopy that allows only thin streaks of light, wire and concrete fences covered with vines, angels standing tall and straight, and cherubs playing in tiny pools, the Benedictines' Roman garden—cool, quiet (at this time of year when school is out), shady and lush—soothes the body and quiets a restless mind and spirit.

Rev. Benigno Benabarre, OSB, adviser of the SBC Alumni Association (SBAAA), calls it an "oasis of prayer and silence."

Fronting the living quarters of the Benedictine monks, it is the most striking of several green patches that provide a much welcome relief from the glass and concrete of school buildings. Concrete benches, some cleverly hidden by thick vegetation, allow for moments of silence for reflection and meditation.

The garden is almost as much a balm to a tired soul as the beautiful church, with its replica of the Santo Niño of Prague, and the smaller, more solemn abbey chapel where the monks have their private religious rituals.

Though the abbey and college have a gardener, one learns that Benedictine monks occasionally turn their hand at tending the greenery.

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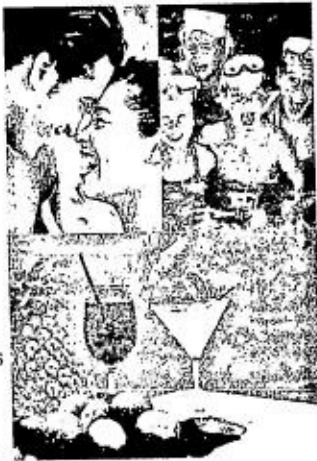
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Opus Dei's response to 'Da Vinci Code' allegations

WITH THE MOVIE "THE DA VINCI CODE" set to open May 19, Opus Dei is taking a soft approach in countering the book's allegations that, as a group, it is murderous, misogynic and Machiavellian.

Instead of bringing author Dan Brown to court, Opus Dei opted to talk with Doubleday that published the book and Sony, whose Columbia Pictures made the movie.

Brian Finnerty, New York spokesperson for the Rome-based organization whose 3,000 American members are based in Chicago, where its United States presence began in 1949, said the response was "polite and non-committal."

"Opus Dei and its 86,000 members worldwide face a different kind of image problem with 'The Da Vinci Code.' Not only is the film expected to be 2006's hottest movie, some 25 million people already have read the book that depicts Opus Dei's leader as a bonkers bishop who dispatches an albino monk to brutally dispose of those threatening to blow the Catholic Church's 2,000-year cover-up of Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdalene and the daughter He fathered.

One inaccuracy, among many the organization cited, was "there are no monks in Opus Dei, albino or otherwise," said Finnerty.

"While we're not going to reveal any details about the film until it is released in May, we welcome the discussion inspired by it and hope that it can encourage people to learn more about many of the issues raised by 'The Da Vinci Code,'" Jim Kennedy, senior vice president of corporate communications for

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang



Sony Pictures Entertainment, said in an e-mail.

Unwilling to take legal action, Rome-based Opus Dei spokesperson Marc Carroggio, in a recent interview, said the organization was also unwilling to allow "Da Vinci" to define it.

"The movie is like a big wave that is going to hit the beach whether we like it or not... We're going to try to ride the wave," Finnerty said. "...I mean using every opportunity we can to tell the world about the reality of Opus Dei and the reality of the Catholic Church."

Reflection

Today is Palm Sunday. Jesus rides into Jerusalem in glory, but a day later He is arrested and tortured to die on the Cross on Good Friday. We Christians profess our faith in God, but we don't think twice about offending Him.

Doubleday published "The Da Vinci Code" and, at the same time, expressed interest in publishing "The Way," a collection of points for prayer written by Opus Dei founder Msgr. Josemaria Escriva who was canonized as saint in 2002.

Successful intercession

Servant of God Montserrat Grases

es, a numerary of Opus Dei, died in 1959 in Barcelona, Spain from Ewing's Sarcoma. Immediately after her death, news of her sanctity spread and her intercessions for miracles were answered by God.

I prayed to Montserrat for a non-surgical treatment for the husband of a friend who had a block in his intestines. The prayer was answered.

Those who want prayer cards can write to me c/o PO Box 2050, Manila. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Montserrat Grases, pray for us, especially for our young people

Washing of the feet

The Chapel of Our Mother of the Eucharist and Grace in Barangay San Vicente, Sta. Maria, Bulacan will have the Washing of the Feet of the Apostles at 6 p.m., April 13, Holy Thursday.

After the Mass, the Blessed Sacrament will be brought to the Altar of Repose at 7 p.m. A Holy Hour follows.

At 11:30 p.m., April 15, the Easter Vigil begins. The Salubong takes place at 2 a.m., April 16, to be telecast live on RPN 9.

Santo Entierro

The Knights of Columbus, Fatima Council 6102, escort the Santo Entierro during The Good Friday procession in Our Lady of Fatima in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite. Lawyer Leon del Rosario, whose family owns the image, is one of them.

During Holy Week, the Santo Entierro, together with other Lenten images, will be displayed in SM Bacoor.



"WEDDING in Cana" at Morong, Rizal, exhibit

Semana Santa

Al Perez, famous for his paintings of churches, is showing Lenten images and portraits of saints at the Purple Art Gallery until April 25. The gallery is on 4/floor, SM Megamall.

Exhibit

Catch Noli Principe Manalang's first one-man exhibit of the Blessed Virgin Mary in her various titles. "Ave Maria" exhibit is at Gallery Genesis, 4/F, SM Megamall.

Feast day

The feast of St. Expeditus, advocate of urgent cases, falls on April 19. Triduum of Masses will be celebrated at 6 p.m., April 17-19, at St. Andrew Cathedral, La Huerta, Parañaque; and at 6:30 p.m., on the same days at the Holy Family Parish in Madre Selva St., Roxas

District, Quezon City.

A procession will be held after the 6:30 p.m. Mass on April 19 at the Holy Family Church.

At the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Marilao, Bulacan, there will be Masses at 6:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., April 17-19, according to Cynthia Sta. Ana-Cruz, a devotee. She said devotion to the saint was popular among Pinoys in California. She got her first novena from a cousin in Los Angeles.

The St. Patrick Cathedral in San Francisco has a statue of St. Expeditus. I was there in 1997 and went to thank him for making my trip possible. St. Expeditus is known for his intercessions for the granting of visas and the sale of property.

Visita Iglesia

Monyeen Singson, whose cancer of the colon is on remission, is



SERVANT of God Montserrat Grases

inviting pilgrims to do the Stations of the Cross and pray the Rosary in Field of Faith in Barangay Lamot, Calauan, Laguna. Text Nene at 0919-3781664.

The Sisters of Mary in Silang, Cavite are inviting people to visit the spring of the Virgin of the Poor and Fr. Al's Museum.

Found love poem revives old feelings

DEAR EMILY,

I was inspired to write this letter after reading your "Postscripts" for Valentine's Day.

I have a very good friend who I've known for more than 10 years now. He was the vocalist of our local band in 1992 and my friends and I were among

his fans. From being fans, we all became good friends. We'd eat out, talk till the wee hours of the morning and just share our hopes and dreams for the future.

All this time, I honestly thought we were just friends until last year when I was sorting out my stuff as we were in the process of moving out of our house.

I found a poem he wrote for me inside an organizer he gave me as a gift in 1996. I had to read the poem three times before I got the message that he was in love with me.

It blew my mind big time! I felt so happy and all the old feelings came rushing back.... sad that I found out too late when both of us have our own families... and angry why he never told me about his feelings.

We are still good friends and, although he's abroad, we keep in touch by phone and e-mail. When he visits, we dine out as a group.

Is it ok to be honest with him and tell him how much I loved him, too? I don't want to imply that I want a relationship with him, but I just want him to know how I feel.

BEST FRIEND IN LOVE

Look at it this way. You say he wrote you the "love poem" in 1996 but you only discovered it in 2005. And you say you've not lost touch with him all these years. To top it all, both you and the guy have families of your

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo



own now. Breathe deeply and think. Detach yourself for a moment from the giddy feeling and be a neutral, unemotional observer for a while.

The time it took you to get hold of his poem was nine years and your mind took another three cycles to read and fully understand what he was trying to say to you.

I'm sure it felt awesome to get a surprise like that. But unless you're unhappily married, or just plain bored with your husband and need some excitement to spice up your life, why do you even entertain thoughts of being "honest" with this guy about your "feelings?"

Whatever he felt for you is almost a decade old and he might not even remember writing the "love poem" for you. If he ever was interested in you, he could have followed up that poem with a phone call or another letter just to be sure you got his message.

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.



AYAB-ORILLANO

Laurice Ann Orillano, daughter of Ernesto and Belen Orillano, will exchange vows with Roy Dennis Ayab, son of Loreto and Zenaida Ayab, at San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila, on April 16. Reception will be at Patio Victoria Sophia Gardens. Gowns of the entourage were designed and executed by Paul Rex Mateo of The Wedding Day.



CABALZA-OLIVA

Chester Cabalza, son of Major Cesar and Lolita Cabalza, recently wed Anne Oliva, daughter of Danilo and Francisca Oliva, at St. Francis of Assisi Parish (St. Francis Square), Ortigas Center. Reception was held at Prestige Tower's Penthouse, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center.



OCAMPO-MENDIGO

Doctors Frederick Palmos Ocampo and Mary Joy Catherine Saulog Mendigo, both graduates of the University of Santo Tomas College of Medicine, were recently married at the City Garden Hotel in Makati. The groom is the son of engineer Florentino and Asuncion Ocampo, while the bride is the daughter of engineer Cesar and Honor Mendigo. Jorge Palmos of Palmos Weddings designed the bridal gown.

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

PURPOSES

ACROSS	58 Advertising award	115 Powerful, cobbler-style?	16 Make smaller, perhaps	51 Diamond or Sedaka	85 Sta. — (fabric softener brand)
1 Makes watertight	59 Marinates	121 Salt Lake City sports team	17 Concealed	52 Newbirth of "Cheers"	86 Not well
7 "The Lady — Tramp"	60 Flipped off	122 Do penance	20 Sumac of Peru	53 Mimirick	87 Stephen of "Angie"
10 Cantina pot	61 — Na Na	123 They precede U	23 Came to be	54 Fast Internet svc.	88 TV teacher Kotler
14 Unyielding	62 Slander's cousin	124 Transfer, as data	24 Extra: Abbr. Reverential fear	56 Dr. Leary's drug	92 Senior's group member
18 TV host Conan	63 Sturdy, magnate-style?	125 Bottled (up)	28 Jockey's handful	57 List-curtailing abbr.	93 Protracted
19 Tivo	64 Grave risk	126 Sweet potatoes	29 Cosur d'—, Idaho	61 Bear, in Badajoz	94 Really damage
20 String-and-spool toys	65 Chaney of old films	127 "Sprechen — Deutsch?"	30 Jockey's handful	62 Flock of geese	95 Form thoughts
21 Square footage, e.g.	66 Brutus betrayed him	128 Hairpiece	31 Orlando team	63 — a Rebel!	96 Shameless
22 Docile, eel-style?	67 Ultimatum end		32 "Auld — Syne"	64 Yonder	97 Most tardy
25 Throw	68 1936 Best Actor winner		35 Burn a little	65 Word said twice after "que"	98 Greek H
26 Part of rpm	69 Paul		36 Ratlike bird	66 Mrs. Miners' finds	100 All that and — of chips
27 Flushed, Kerouac-style?	70 Begin anew		37 Attend, as an event	67 Munster	101 Indian instruments
29 Bracelet site	71 Simple, buccaneer-style?		38 "Am — brother's keeper?"	68 "Casa-blanca" heroine	102 Tennis's Andre
32 French epic hero	72 Enticing type		39 Santa — wind	69 "What more — say?"	104 Pope piece
34 Pluck, as eyebrows	73 Whippers BHT or MSG, e.g.		40 Sue	70 Prior to	108 — grill!
35 Unmuffled, Brussels-style?	74 Good Book Level, winery-style?		41 Grafton's — for "Noose"	71 "Annabel Lee" poet	109 Grad's event
41 Called a halt	75 Good Book Level, winery-style?		42 Dahl of Hollywood	72 "Annabel Lee" poet	110 They have charges
42 Enhance — vincit amor	76 Cost to pitch a product		43 Klutz's cry	73 Sall support	111 SSW's opposite
43 "Love conquers all"	77 Bright red fish of the Pacific		44 The Sopranos' actor Robert	74 Lost traction	113 Big public show
45 Sandy's owner	78 Suffix with Canton		46 Wood-mounted design	75 Private pupil	116 Filled up on
46 Culpable, sailor-style?	79 Orderly, fiesta-style?		47 Smoothed (out)	76 Opera highlights	117 Winter bug
55 Make smaller, perhaps	80 Ram's mate			77 Song-and-dance show	118 "Alley —"
	81 See stars?			78 Dangerous dino	119 Charlotte of "Dilfrent Strokes"
					120 Pres. monogram

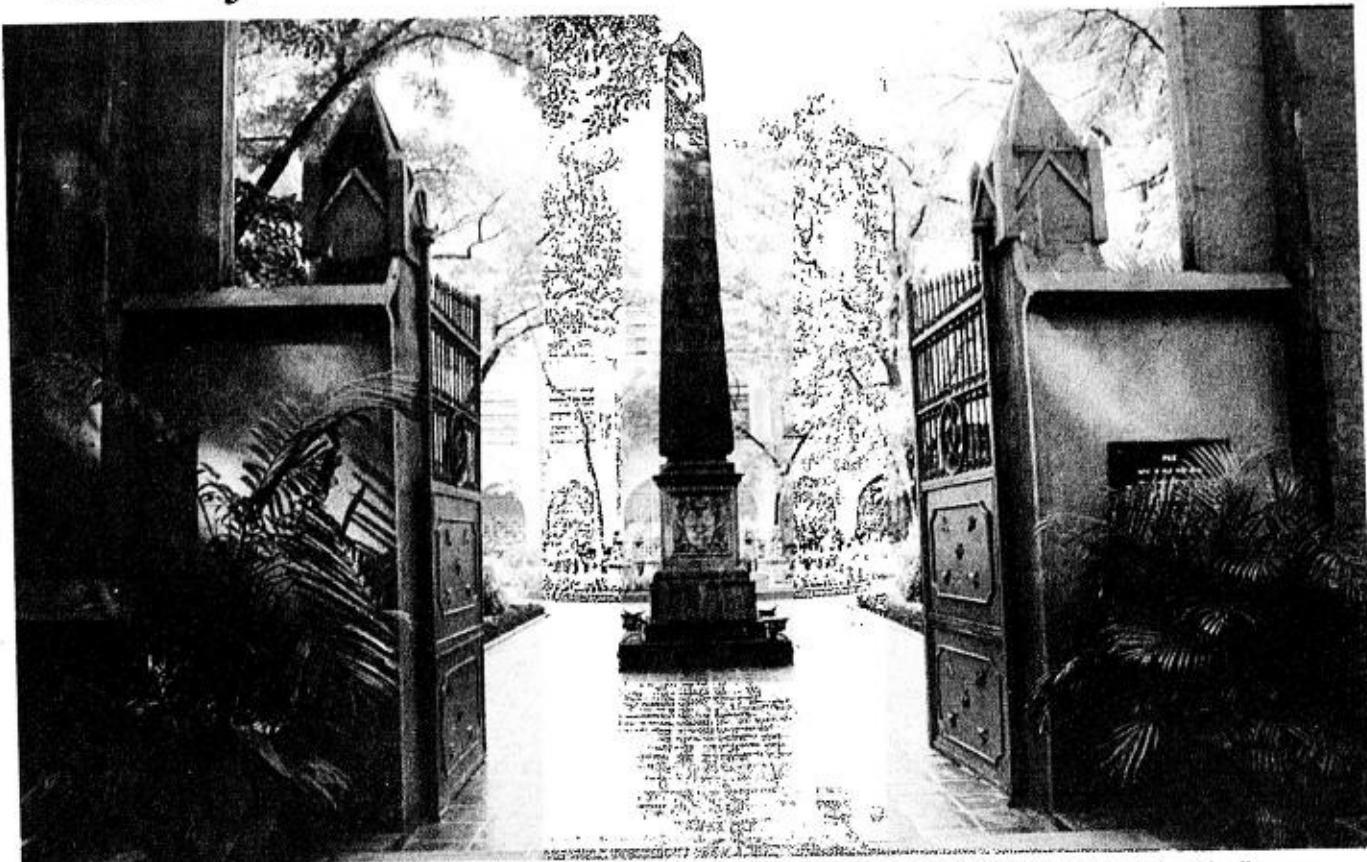
answer on page D3



A LOW wrought-iron gate brings a visitor to a major part of the Roman garden.

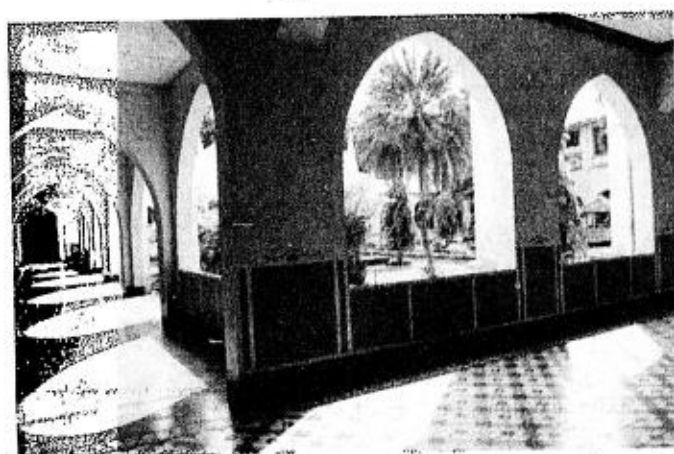


THE STATUE of St. Peter at the far end provides balance to the angel at the top of this pond.



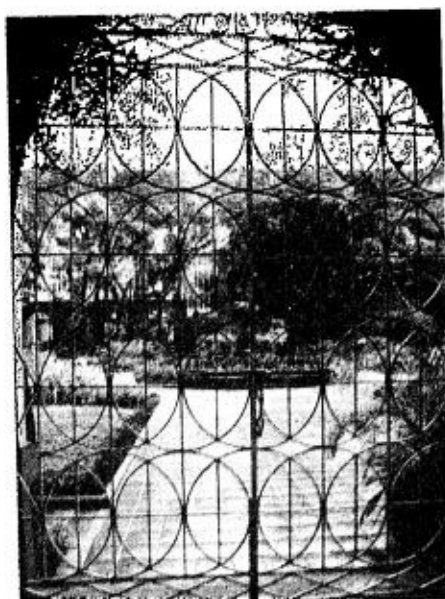
THE OBELISK marked the golden anniversary of SBC. The wrought-iron gates were transferred from the entrance of the old college on Arlegui near Tanduy Street.

A refuge for tired body and spirit



ARCHED windows give tantalizing glimpses of the greenery beyond.

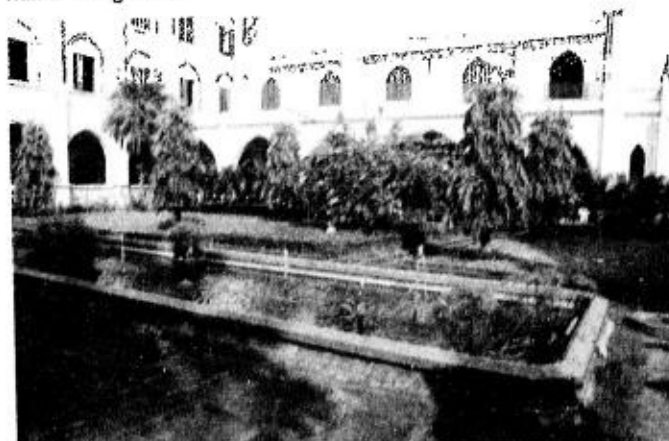
San Beda College's Roman garden is 'an oasis of prayer and silence' amid the cacophony of city life



A NEW gate has been installed opposite the old college's wrought-iron entrance.



A SECTION of the abbey is framed by an arched doorway leading to a minimalist garden.



ONE of the five fountains in the San Beda compound complements a more contemporary landscape.

From page E1

Considering how their brothers in Malaybalay, Bukidnon, have parlayed their green thumbs into a successful agri-business, producing among others a sought-after coffee line, one is inclined to think that farming and gardening may be part of this teaching order's apostolate.

The gardens of San Beda Mendiola, currently headed by Abbot Chancellor Tarcisio Ma. H. Narciso, OSB, have five fountains. Colorful koi swim in the rectangular pond of the fountain in the Roman garden.

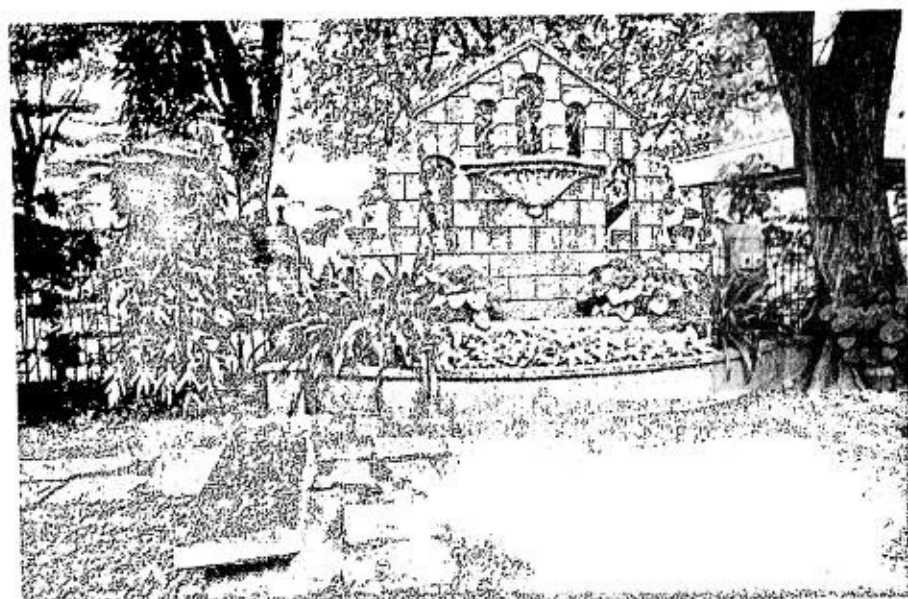
Saints associated with the order, in addition to the angels, provide striking accents. Opposite the angel at the top of the Roman garden's pond, just outside the monks' house, is the statue of St. Peter. Outside the abbey chapel, in a sparser, more trimmed garden, stands the Good Shepherd, which Christians know is one of Jesus' titles.

The garden most readily accessible to both students and visitors is flanked by the two parallel sides of the L-shaped main building housing the administrative offices.

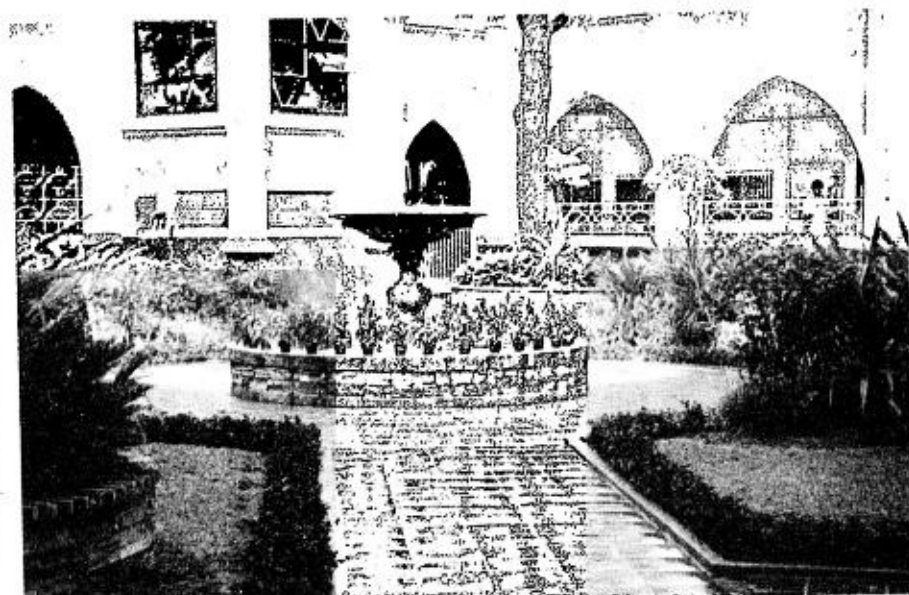
Here, an obelisk, a four-sided stone monument with a pointed top and bearing a thousand blossoms, stands tall and proud, a fitting symbol of victory and the aspiration to climb to heaven. Stylist Rachy Cuna, one of the 2005 Most Distinguished Bedans, used the obelisk, erected in 1950, as the motif in his design of the achievement trophy handed out by the SBCCA to outstanding former graduates.



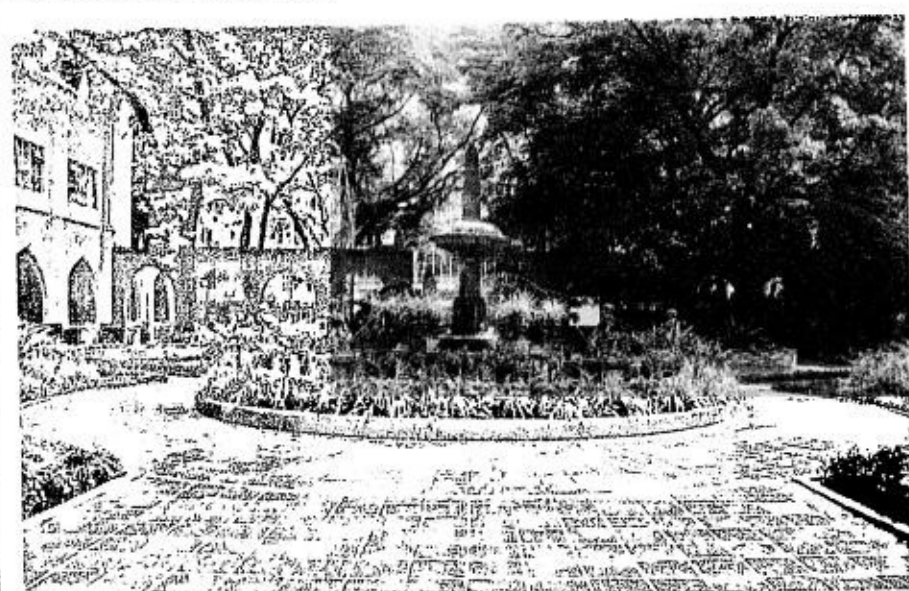
AN ANGEL stands guard at the well-maintained crypt.



STRUCTURES like this add to the appeal of San Beda's gardens.



BRILLIANT red blooms of potted plants surrounding another fountain blend with the color at the bottom of the building behind.



RED tiles provide a dramatic contrast to lush greenery.



THE ROMAN garden, being part of the abbey, offers more spaces for quiet contemplation.



VEGETATION hides a circular concrete bench.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2006

Fi



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National Electrification Administration

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FOR

MASBATE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Pinamarbuan, Mobo, Masbate

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- 30-50 YEARS OLD
- Male or Female
- Graduate of Business Administration, Engineering (Electrical, Mechanical, ECE), Accounting, Finance, Management or Behavioral Science
- With Master's Degree or Post-Graduate Degree preferred
- Must have at least five (5) years managerial experience in a utility-related business enterprise
- Computer literate
- Must be willing to relocate with his/her family in Masbate

Starting Salary P30,000.00

Application forms and additional information may be obtained from the Institutional Development Department, 6th Floor, NEA Building, NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of application is on 28 April 2006.

(Sgd.) EDITA S. BUENO
Administrator



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION
OWWA Center Bldg., F.B. Harrison St., Cor. 7th St., Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 891-7601 to 24

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Re-bidding for the Provision of Medical Healthcare Services
for all OWWA Employees for a Period of One (1) Year

1. The OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION (OWWA), through the 2006 Corporate Budget for the contract approved by the OWWA Board of Trustees, intends to apply the sum of five million four hundred fifty four thousand pesos (P5,454,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the provision of medical healthcare services for OWWA employees. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. THE OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION (OWWA) now re-invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the provision of medical healthcare services through a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) for 303 OWWA employees including one (1) dependent for each for a period of one (1) year. The effective date of the contract is June 21, 2006. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to legal, technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the OWWA BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 to 5:00pm.

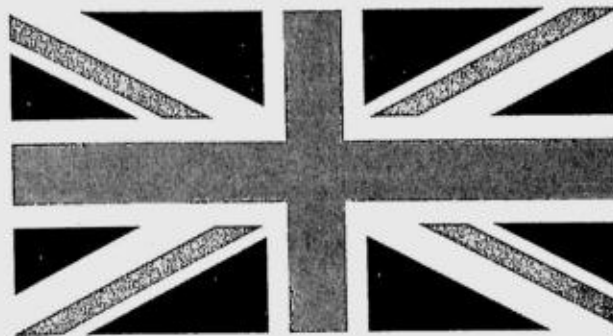
Room 301, Third Floor, OWWA Center Building
FB Harrison cor 7th Street, Pasay City.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the above-named address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of one thousand five hundred pesos only (Php1,500.00) starting April 06, 2006 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The method of payment will be cash or manager's check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The OWWA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on April 20, 2006 10:00am at Blas F. Ople Hall, 5th Floor OWWA Center Building, FB Harrison cor 7th Street, Pasay City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before May 04, 2006 2:00 pm. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash, or certified check or cashier's check or bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit. Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on May 04, 2006 2:00 pm at the Blas F. Ople Hall, 5th Floor OWWA Center Building, FB Harrison cor 7th Street, Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The OWWA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Agency : Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
Contract Person : Dir. Ma. Lourdes V. Reyes
Address : OWWA Center Building, FB Harrison cor 7th Street, Pasay City
Telephone No. : 834-0170
Facsimile No. : 833-1010
Email Address : owwabac@yahoo.com

(Sgd.) DIR. ALBERTO Q. VALENCIANO
BAC Chairman

(PDI-April 2 & 9, 2006)



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PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Marine Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 833-0001 to 47 / 833-1200 fax no. 840-1075

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors, registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as Category C and D, IAC Small, Sub-Category B, Specialty in Electrical Works or General Building - Building & Industrial Plant and have completed within the last ten (10) years at least one (1) supply, delivery, installation, testing and commissioning of electrical distribution system contract amounting to at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF THE BOHOL EXPANDED RURAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT STAGE I, SCHEDULE 1 (5 SITIOS) EDC 06-039

The Approved Budget is PhP 1,089,429.51 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 110 calendar days.

Application forms for eligibility and the bidding documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o F.T. Tolibao local 5179) starting April 3, 2006 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One Thousand (PhP 1,000.00).

Site inspection is on April 25-26, 2006. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on April 28, 2006 2:00 p.m. at the BAC Conference Room, First Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Application for eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, First Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila not later than 2:00 p.m. (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time) of May 9, 2006 and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-April 3 & 9, 2006)



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Republic of the Philippines
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Marikina Avenue, Pasig City
Tel. Nos. 636-65-43 to 636-65-47
Trunk Line 632-13-01 local 2115
Website: <http://www.deped.gov.ph>



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for Supply and Delivery to the DepED Division Offices of the following:

Package No./ Quantity In packs	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline/ Opening of Bids	Price of Bidding Documents (non-refundable)	Venue	End user
1. Fortified Instant Noodles 2,535,336	Php15,212,016.00	April 21, 2006 10:00 AM	May 4, 2006 10:00 AM	Php4,000.00	Sulwagan ng Kanunangan, Rizal Bldg., DepED Complex, Marikina Ave., Pasig City	Health and Nutrition Center
2. Fortified Biscuits 1,690,224	Php9,887,224.00					
3. Powdered full Cream Chocolate Milk 3,200,000	Php24,000,000.00					

Bids received that exceed the ABC per package shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents in Compact Disc (CD) copy or hard copy shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Marikina Avenue, Pasig City, starting April 4, 2006 upon payment of non-refundable fee in cash indicated above.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at <http://www.deped.gov.ph> or www.procurement.gov.ph or call DepED-PS at telephone no. 636-65-43 or fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) Atty. CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA
Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI-April 2 & 9, 2006)



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 Monday to Sunday
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 Day before publication

My soul glorifies the Lord...
 For I always do the will of my Father.

SR. MARY ESPERANZA A. QUIRINO, RGS.

June 25, 1926 - April 8, 2006

Peacefully met her Creator with her boots on.

In total giving of herself for 44 years as a Good Shepherd Sister, she worked tirelessly for the poor and the integrity of creation.

The Philippine Province of the Good Shepherd Sisters and her family request your prayerful remembrance. You are invited to join us at the Euphrasian Chapel, 1043 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City, in thanking our Shepherd God for giving us the gift of "HOPE."

The Mass of the Resurrection is on Tuesday, April 11, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. Interment follows at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Atty. Dulce Marie Magsambol - Fadri

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 27, 2006 wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all of you, our relatives and friends, near and far, who spend precious time with us, sent flowers, mass cards, letters of sympathy, gave donations and who, in countless ways, expressed your love, concern and support in celebrating Dulce's coming home to her Creator.

"If you knew how much I love you, you'd cry for joy"
 Medugorje

"In peace
 I shall both
 lie down and
 sleep
 for you alone
 Lord make me
 secure."
 (Psalm 4:9)

ANITA JUANENGO FUENTES

Passed away in Toronto, Canada on Tuesday, March 28, 2006.

She is survived by daughter Cecile and son Joey Magsipok; daughter-in-law Lennette and grandchildren John, Charisse and Kevin (†). She leaves behind brothers Alfonso, Alberto Armando and Antonio (†) Juanengo, their spouses, children and grandchildren.

Friends may visit at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Mass will be held on Holy Saturday, April 15 at 8:00 a.m. to be followed by burial at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

EFREN BUÑAG TRIVIÑO

PASSED AWAY IN THE GRACE OF OUR LORD
 On April 8, 2006 at the age of 95.

His loving wife Lourdes (†); children **Fermina, Cecilia, Vicente and Menchi, Ursula and Tom, Antonio and Perla, Albert, Victor, Rosario and Rick;** grandchildren **Michael, Anthony and Jennifer, Jessica, Kim, Crissie, Mark and Nicky;** brothers **Edilberto (†), Clodualdo (†), Luz, and Oscar (†);** relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel D, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City until noon of Monday, April 10, 2006. Wake will follow at Boac, Marinduque.

MARIANO PLATON DEL ROSARIO

born in Baao, Camarines Sur on November 26, 1912
 peacefully joined his Creator on April 6, 2006.

His children: Aida, Nardito, Salve, Fidel, Lino, Salome, Nona (†), Mariano, Jr., Jose, Deborah, Tomas, and Manuel; his grandchildren; and his sole surviving brother Most Rev. Manuel P. Del Rosario, D.D. request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Chapel 12.

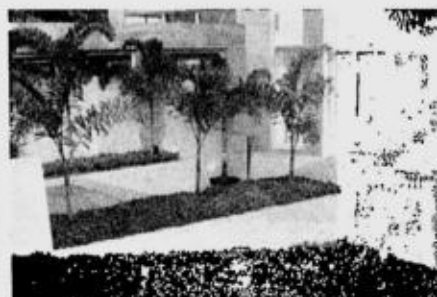
The cremation will be on Wednesday, April 12, 2006, 12:30 p.m. at La Funeraria Paz Crematorium, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

DEATH NOTICE

ONESIMO C. ARJONA

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
 on April 5, 2006 at the age of 71.

Interment will be today, April 9, 2006 in Rizal, Laguna after the 1:00 p.m. Mass



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 setting. Please call our Marketing Office
 at 723-6494 / 723-7651 / 723-6335.



"There is an
 appointed time for
 everything,
 and a time for every
 affair under the
 heaven."
 Ecclesiastes 3:11

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
 The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for Printing and Delivery of the following:

Package	Item No.	Items	Quantity in Copies	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline / Opening of Bids	Venue	End user
A	1	Individual Health Cards (Elementary) 3,000,000 copies		Php 2,250,000.00	April 21, 2006 11:00 a.m.	May 04, 2006 11:00 a.m.	Bulwagan ng Kanunangan, DepED Complex, Marikina Ave., Pasig City	Health and Nutrition Center (HNC)
	1	Individual Health Cards (Secondary)		Php 1,400,000.00				
B	2	Health Examination Cards (Form 86) 50,000 copies		Php 133,500.00				
	3	Teacher's Oral Health Cards 50,000 copies		Php 75,000.00				
		TOTAL		Php 3,858,500.00				

Bids received that exceed the ABC per item shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Marikina Avenue, Pasig City, starting on April 10, 2006 upon payment of the non-refundable fee of PHP 2,000.00 in cash to the DepED Cashier.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at <http://www.dep.gov.ph> or www.procurement.gov.ph or call DepED-PS at telephone no. 636-65-43 or fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) Atty. CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA
 Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairperson

(PDI - April 9 & 16, 2006)

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If you have not yet claimed your check/benefit, please go to our Claims Department, 6th Floor, Triumph Building, 1610 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City with telephone nos. 927-9671 to 75/926-8371 or any of our branches where you purchased your ACE Plan.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you and your families.

Himlayang Pilipino Plans, Inc. Management

(PDI - April 9, 2006)



PAG-IBIG FUND EXTENDS FINANCING FOR MURCIA LGU HOUSING
 Vice President Noli de Castro, concurrent Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) and the Pag-IBIG Board of Trustees, congratulates Murcia Mayor Esteban Coscolluela during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Pag-IBIG Fund and the Murcia local government unit to fast track the development and implementation of the Municipal Employees Housing Development program. The project, which is expected to benefit about 200 employees of the Murcia Municipal government, is a joint venture of the LGU and the Gawad Kalinga. Also in photo are Tony Meloto, Executive Director, Gawad Kalinga, and Atty. Miro Quimbo, President and CEO, Pag-IBIG Fund.

MORE RELIABLE POWER FOR CALBAYOG AND ADJACENT TOWNS

National Transmission Corporation President Alan Ortiz (extreme right) and local government officials of Samar led the ground-breaking rites for the P865.5 million Wright-Calbayog transmission line project in Calbayog City recently. Participating in the event were (from left) Calbayog City SP Member Regina Rabuya, Sta. Margarita Vice-Mayor Edwin A. Pueblos, Calbayog OIC Vice-Mayor Noel Sermene, SAMELCO Gen. Manager Leovigildo Ancheta, San Jorge Vice-Mayor Marcelina D. Yu, Transco ROW Manager Erwin Hermosa, Asst. VP Oscar Camerino, Calbayog T/L Project Manager Libertino C. Villaluna, and Calbayog City Mayor Mel Senen S. Sarmiento.



CREBA launches SPACE+ Magazine

THE CHAMBER OF REAL ESTATE BUILDERS Association, Inc. (Creba, Inc) launched its official magazine, SPACE+ Explorations in Modern Living during its Monthly Business Meeting at Hotel Intercontinental Makati last March 20 presided over by its National President Pedro C. Tario. According to Editha L. Manansala, Creba, Inc.'s VP for Public Relations, and SPACE+ Executive Publisher, the magazine was primarily conceptualized as a magazine that goes beyond real estate and construction, as it also encompasses lifestyle, business, leisure and travel. It is a magazine that caters to the needs not only of insiders but also of investors, speculators and direct consumers. Creba International Foundation, Inc.'s (CIF) President Purita R. Soliven also adds that, SPACE+ gives maximum value and utility to both advertisers and readers by delivering a quality magazine that will have both local and global reach as it captures the more than 4,000 members of Creba and will be the main vehicle of Creba International in its marketing road shows. The magazine will have three (3) main sections: Living Space that will cover people, events and places; Sightings that will promote regional developments and tourism havens; and Pipeline which will be a complete information guide for balikbayans and OFWs. Its first issue will come out on May 19, 2006. For more information please call Cora Fabro, Creba secretariat at (632) 373-2272 or (632) 373-2273.

Rebap on the road

THE REAL ESTATE BROKERS ASSOCIATION of the Philippines, Inc. (Rebap) currently headed by Emily Q. Duterte is reaching out to all realty practitioners with the intention of professionalizing and furthering the practice of the realty trade. Starting with the present Rebap setup and membership, the association has launched a nationwide campaign, through its "Rebap on the Road; Linking Real Estate Brokers Nationwide" program, to improve its relationships with Brokers and realty practitioners including government agencies or offices that affect the profession. The original intention was to visit and update local Rebap Chapters but it turned out to be a more practical and beneficial activity if we visit the local officials as well. Lately, courtesy calls were made to some of the Offices of the Register of Deeds, Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Assessors Office and the Treasurer's Office to develop more harmonious working relations and with the end in view of enhancing and facilitating transactions while minimizing red tape and graft and corruption, if not to eliminate it. This practice will go on and on until Rebap is well known nationwide, and maybe internationally, as an association of quality and professional realty business practitioners. Realty practitioners, more particularly those who are not yet members of any realty organization are encouraged to contact the REBAP Secretariat at tel. numbers 373-22-80, 373-22-81 or visit us at ebapnational@yahoo.com or at 2nd floor Creba Bldg Rocas Ave., Quezon City. Interested parties may also contact Rebap Members or Chapters near their residences or place of business practice.

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QCHS Grand Alumni Homecoming

THE QUEZON CITY HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI Association, Inc. will hold its 15th General Assembly and Grand Alumni Homecoming today at the school campus. It is hosted by Batch '81 with Batch '66 as co-host.

This year's honorees are the Silver Jubilarians, Batch '81; the Pearl Jubilarians, Batch '76; the Ruby Jubilarians, Batch '66, and the Golden Jubilarians, Batch '56. Registration starts at 2:00 p.m. Motif is South Pacific.

For more details, please contact: Cel Cuvlin, '81, 0917-622-7246; Divina Paz C. Sacramento, '66, 825-0127, 826-3196; Tita Peñaranda Montinola, '56, 922-7087; and Art Dialogo, Secretary, 416-4898.

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(Commonwealth, Makati, Ortigas, or Alabang)
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TECHNICAL CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVES

(Commonwealth, Makati, or Ortigas)
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(Makati)
Investigate caller inquiry through client systems, utilizing healthcare knowledge in responding to hospitals, physicians, and other medical providers. Candidates must have medical background.

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(Commonwealth)
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- Proficient in Windows NT, XP and Microsoft Exchange
- Experienced in network administration and design, LAN and WAN

FINANCE & CONTROL ASSOCIATES

- Male/Female between 21-25 years old
- Graduate of BS Accountancy, preferably CPA
- Proficient in MS Applications, Database
- Logical, organized and have eyes for details

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Female between 25-30 years old, dynamic and resourceful
- Graduate of any 4-year course
- At least three years experience in administrative support functions including, but not limited to, preparation of business communication
- Computer literate
- Excellent oral and written communication

COMPANY NURSE

- Female between 25-30 years old
- Registered Nurse
- At least one year work experience in the field of nursing, either industrial or hospital setting
- Good command of oral and written communication
- Computer literate

PRODUCTION & MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN

- Male between 21-25 years old
- Graduate Engineering course, preferably BSECE
- Graduate of related vocational / technical courses may also be considered
- Belonging to the top 10% of the graduating class
- Computer literate

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT / LOGISTICS ASSOCIATES

- Male/Female, at least 23 years old
- Graduate of BSIE, Manufacturing Engineering, Industrial Management Engineering from a reputable school
- Has in-depth knowledge / good theoretical background in materials programming, planning, inventory control, purchasing and warehousing
- Computer literate
- Good command of oral and written communication

QUALITY ASSURANCE ASSOCIATES

- Male/Female between 21-25 years old
- Graduate of BS ChE, BS Chem
- Strong background in the above-mentioned disciplines and in statistics and analytical methods
- Computer literate

BRAND MANAGER

- Male/Female between 25-30 years old
- Graduate of communication arts / advertising-related course
- At least 2 years work experience in product or brand communication strategy and/or relative background in marketing strategies
- Knowledgeable and creative in putting together marketing and communication plans
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Computer literate

MARKETING RESEARCH SPECIALIST

- Male/Female between 23-28 years old
- Graduate of BSBA major in Marketing, Economics, Statistics, Management
- With in-depth knowledge in marketing research
- Good statistical and analytical background
- Familiar with retail audit systems/methods, qualitative & quantitative study
- Knowledgeable in preparation of comprehensive business plans
- Innovative and knows current business icons
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Computer literate

AREA SALES MANAGER (for GMA)

- Male/Female, graduate of BSBA or Engineering
- At least three years work experience in the related field
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Personable, aggressive, assertive, diligent
- Open-minded, flexible and can adapt to various management models
- Must know how to drive

KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER

- Male/Female, graduate of BSBA or Engineering
- At least three years work experience in the related field
- Highly skilled in the said work discipline
- Analytical, dynamic and can apply and internalize business models
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Personable, aggressive, assertive, diligent
- Open-minded, flexible and can adapt to various management models
- Must know how to drive

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER (for Region 1 & GMA)

- Male/Female, graduate of BSBA or Engineering
- At least 5-8 years work experience in FMCG, knowledgeable in BCP, territorial and daily routine management
- Achiever in sales with excellent communication skills
- Personable, aggressive, assertive, diligent
- Open-minded, flexible and can adapt to various management models
- Must know how to drive

DRIVERS

- Holder of professional driver's license
- At least 10 years of driving experience
- Excellent driving skills and habits

We invite applicants to send their comprehensive resumé and transcript of records to:

THE HR MANAGER
MAILBOX 70
LKG TOWER, 6801 AYALA AVE.
MAKATI CITY



TOPIGS Philippines is searching for a general manager.

Company: TOPIGS Philippines, with its headquarters in Ortigas Center, Pasig City is one of the market leaders in the field of pig genetics in The Philippines. TOPIGS Philippines is an affiliate company of TOPIGS International, a growing, innovative and one of the biggest worldwide operating pig breeding companies from and for pig producers with its headquarters in The Netherlands.

TOPIGS Philippines is seeking for a candidate for the position of

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Knowledge/Skills Requirements:

- Academic training (master's or bachelor's degree) and work experience in the livestock industry (preferable in the pig industry) at management level
- Hands on manager with conviction and perseverance who can work under pressure.
- Demonstrated management and leadership capabilities, able to make decisions independently.
- Proven skills in marketing knowledge and technology.
- Is capable to develop integrated concepts.
- Proven communication skills: Well-developed interactive/presentation skills to communicate effectively detailed factual and conceptual information/strategies to internal and external audiences either on a one-to-one base. Well developed influence/interview/negotiation skills to serve the complex personal and business service needs of prospects and clients.

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All you need to be is a graduating or 4th year college student in a related course. Submit a letter of request from your school and your biodata personally to our office at **Suite 330, Mile Long Building, Amorsolo cor. Herrera Sts., Makati MM** during office hours and wait for our call.



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- Strong background in product development and menu planning, R&D and recipe costing, menu execution and food presentation.
- Can handle both a la carte and banquet operations.
- Experience in personnel and administrative management.
- Excellent training and mentoring skills an advantage.

HEAD COOKS

- At least 28 to 35 years old.
- Graduate of HRM/HRA or any related four year course.
- Highly adaptable and flexible; has culinary & management skills.
- At least 2 years relevant technical experience.
- Resourceful innovative and creative.
- Computer literate.
- Strong training, mentoring and team building skills.

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- At least 25 to 35 years old.
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You will be reporting to the Call Center Team
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Job Requirements:

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- Excellent verbal and written English
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- Excellent listening skills
- Computer literate
- Willing to work in the night shift

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QUALIFICATIONS:

- ☐ College graduate preferably major in Accounting
- ☐ 1 year experience in related job.
- ☐ With secretarial skills
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RESEARCH ASSISTANT

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ☐ College graduate preferably major in Mass Communications, Journalism, Economics, BS Statistics, BS Math
- ☐ 1 year experience as researcher
- ☐ Knows how to write; Proficient in computer, especially in search technologies, Excel, Corel, Powerpoint, Netscape, and Microsoft Word programs; Creative; Very particular with details; Willing to work on field assignments; Can work under pressure

Send your application letter and comprehensive resume to:

THE HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc.
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EDUCATION: Associate Degree (A.S. or A.S.S.) in Dental Assisting or Dental Technology preferred. High School graduates who are Registered Dental Assistants or Certified Dental Assistants with Registration (R.D.A.) or Certification (C.D.A.) required.

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EDUCATION: B.S. Degree in Pharmacy

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QUALIFIED APPLICANTS must PERSONALLY register and submit detailed resume with job descriptions, certificates of employment/training, diploma and transcript of records, board license / certificate, valid PRC card, two (2) letters of reference from previous/current supervisor. No Objection Certificate (for ex-Saudi), passport copy (if available) and 1 pc. passport size picture, between 8-4 PM at MANPOWER REGISTRY DIVISION, Window K, Ground Floor, Blas F. Ople Bldg. (formerly POEA Bldg.), Ortigas Ave. cor. EDSA, Mandaluyong City or the nearest POEA Regional Extension Unit for the issuance of KFSH Application Form and Skills Checklist.

NOTE: MAILED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.
Arrange in a cream folder all xerox copies chronologically in accordance with the above-mentioned requirements. Bring original documents arranged in similar manner for verification

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- Must be customer service-oriented, self-starter, resourceful and a team player
- Must have a Non-Professional driver's license with 1 year experience in driving
- Proficient in Windows/MS Office

New Business Assistant

- College Graduate with a degree in Business Administration
- Preferably with Business Insurance Background
- Between 22-25 years old
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Must be customer service-oriented, self-starter, resourceful and a team player
- Proficient in Windows/MS Office

Account Officer (Metro Manila & Cebu City)

- College graduate with a degree in Marketing, Business Administration or any equivalent 4-year course.
- Preferably with work experience in Group Insurance, both in sales and administration.
- Between 25-35 years old
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Must be customer service-oriented, self-starter, resourceful and a team player
- Must have a Non-Professional driver's license with 1 year experience in driving
- Proficient in Windows/MS Office

Training & Sales Development Assistant

- Graduate of Bachelor's Degree in Marketing or Business Administration, preferably with background in training and development.
- At least 1 year work experience in the same field
- Between 21-30 years old
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Must be customer service oriented, self-starter, resourceful and a team player
- Proficient in MS Office applications

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Interested applicants may send their resume in MS Word format thru e-mail or may visit us at our office, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

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- Manages overall operating budget for site to meet profitability margins
- Formulates ongoing standards, processes and solutions to capitalize on organizational learning and continuous improvement
- Defines, clarifies and communicates key performance and quality measures for business units and direct report personnel

Qualifications:

- In-depth knowledge of: call processing, customer service principles, customer retention and loyalty, back office support, and call center management.
- Five or more years of experience in call center or Six or more years management experience.
- Bachelors degree in business management or related discipline or equivalent experience
- Solid leadership skills, to include developing people, driving results, identifying opportunities for and managing change, etc.
- Knowledge and understanding of key metrics and performance indicators (measure, impact, etc.)
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Interested parties can hand carry or send their curriculum vitae, one piece 2x2 photo, school credentials and employment certificates to:

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20th Floor Equitable Bank Tower
8751 Paseo de Roxas Avenue, 1226 Makati City
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- Proactive, has initiative, flexible, fast learner, enthusiastic and passionate. A Team player.

OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

- Graduate of Computer Science, Management Information Systems or related course
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- Strong problem solving skills
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- Proactive, has initiative, flexible, fast learner, enthusiastic and passionate. A Team player

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- Graduate of Computer Science or a similar course
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- An advantage but not required: Java, Mobile, applications, Graphics/GUI programming, OO and design patterns, Test Driven Development, Refactoring
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MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- Female
- Age 24-35
- A graduate of any 4-year course from a reputable university

Experience in retail management needed. Should have great interpersonal and communication skills, proven leadership skills and possess a passion for retail and healthy living. Strong PC skills, including Word and Excel, are a must.

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As a member of the team, you will play a crucial role in the success of our brand. We offer competitive pay/incentive scheme, professional growth, and offer a challenging and motivating job atmosphere.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- Female
- Age 22 - 30
- College Graduate

Must be able to provide an elevated level of service to each and every customer. Must possess a positive attitude and a passion for retail and healthy living.

Computer literate and proficient with the Internet, Excel, Word and Power Point
Fluent in English, proficient in Tagalog
Customer and service oriented

Please submit resumé with 2x2 picture to:

The General Manager
Aura Athletica
1st Power Plant Mall, Rockwell, Makati
Or e-mail resumé with picture to happy.lacson@auraathletica.com



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- BS CoE/ ComSci or equivalent trade course.
- At least one (1) year experience.
- Familiar with Linux Servers and Workstations.
- With working knowledge of Network Segments, Switches and TCP/IP.
- Good command in English.
- Dedicated, energetic and can work long hours.
- A+, Network+, and Microsoft Certification is a plus.
- VPN, SSL, DSL experience is an advantage.

PROJECT ENGINEER

- MALE. BS Civil Engineering Graduate.
- Knowledge in AutoCAD/ Estimating works.
- Previous experience at least one (1) year working as a Project/ Site Engineer.
- Trustworthy, mature, dependable, open to new ideas and Computer literate.
- Knows how to prepare details needed at project sites.

MARKET DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

- FEMALE. Engineering or Architecture graduate.
- One (1) year experience in Marketing (previous connection with a construction firm an advantage).
- Computer literate, MS PowerPoint proficiency.
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to join our Sales Force, with the following qualifications:

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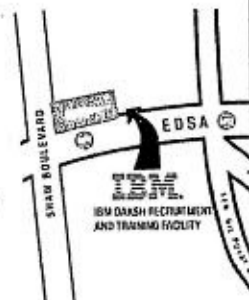
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VSO Philippines (VSOP) welcomes applications for two high quality, committed staff to work for its peace building work in Northern Mindanao:

PROGRAMME ASSISTANT (PA)

Applicants must:

- Have a master's degree (or equivalent in experience)
- Have at least 3 year's experience in social development work, preferably in project management or organizational development and organizational capacity assessment
- Have experience in report writing and presentation capabilities, research and issue analysis
- Have strong communication skills in English, both written and verbal
- Preferably be proficient in Maranao
- Have a good grasp of Mindanao history and understanding of the Mindanao conflict; preferably a Mindanaon
- Be willing to travel to the rural areas of Lanao del Norte and Sur
- Be task oriented and can work well under pressure
- Have skills and experience in volunteer administration and support
- Have strong people management skills and an effective team player
- Be computer literate in MS Office applications

The principal duty and responsibility of the PA post is to assist the PEACE Mindanao Programme Area Manager in project management. This would include the following:

- Volunteer support and administration.
- Programme area management.
- Implement the PEACE Mindanao information and advocacy plan of action
- Maintaining and administering the wider VSOP programme

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (AO)

Applicants must:

- Be a graduate of any four-year course
- Have at least three (3) years relevant work experience in the NGO sector or in other development organizations with a cross-cultural context
- Have strong communication skills in English, both written and verbal
- Have effective computer skills, competence in word processing, presentation programmes and techniques (e.g. MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc.) and familiarity with internet/email services (Outlook, Internet Explorer, etc.)
- Know how to take minutes of meetings and have experience in the monitoring of equipment and supplies inventory
- Have excellent people management and good interpersonal skills, including adequate negotiating and bargaining experience
- Have at least a general knowledge of Mindanao situation
- Have maturity and objectivity, tactfulness and diplomacy, flexibility and an effective team player
- Have patience, a positive attitude and a good sense of humor
- Be a self-starter and can work with minimum supervision and willing to work under pressure and out of hours

The principal duty and responsibility of the AO post is to assist the PEACE Mindanao Programme Area Manager in the administrative management of the project office. This would include the following:

- General office management and administrative support for Peace Mindanao staff and volunteers
- Assistance to the Programme Manager in the effective use and management of supplies, equipment, and other properties of Peace Mindanao; and,
- Volunteer support in terms of accommodation, travel, medical care, visa renewal, communication and security information

The successful applicants will be offered a one-year contract. Duty station is Iligan City, Lanao del Norte, Mindanao. The applicants should be in post no later than June 1, 2006.

If you are interested in applying for these posts, please access the VSO standard application form from the VSO Philippines website - <http://www.geocities.com/vsophilippines>. WE WILL ONLY CONSIDER APPLICATIONS IN ELECTRONIC FORM. Forms must be submitted no later than 12.30 hrs. 28 April 2006. Interview date for the PA position is May 8, 2006 and for the AO position is May 9, 2006 in Iligan City. Only shortlisted applicants will be notified.



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The Post

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The Director,
Human Resource Development Service
6/F, Trade and Industry Building,
361 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue,
Makati City

hrds@dti.dti.gov.ph

(mailed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted after the 5 pm deadline on 21 April 2006)

CORE COMPETENCY REQUISITES

Must have at least 5 years extensive experience in general practice of law preferably with emphasis on commercial law, business law, fair trade law, consumer protection law, and administrative law including

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Incomplete applications will not be processed
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- Computer literate
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- Bachelor of Science in Computer Science / Engineering, Information Technology, Computer Application or related course

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Work experience:

Minimum of 3-4 years post qualification experience
Minimum of 2-3 years work experience in big accounting firms an advantage

Skills:

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- Solid background in taxation, financial accounting systems and controls
- US GAAP reporting experience an advantage
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Desired Attributes:

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The HR Department
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Loneliness in work

By Bishop Precioso
D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

WORK NORMALLY SLOWS down or even comes to a pause as the Holy Week celebrations are being observed by the majority of the believers. Such disengagement from routine activity could provide the worker the chance to reflect on his inner being—the source of his strength to work. In meditating, for example, on today's chosen Gospel focus, where Jesus experienced the intense pain of loneliness—when He cried aloud "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"—the worker could resonate with Jesus from his experiences of boredom and loneliness in his work; and perhaps he could discover the deeper significance of his own pain and sufferings at work.

One could feel lonely or forsaken even while at work, seemingly busy and occupied with tasks and things or apparently interacting with co-

workers. Even those who insist on getting more work in order to get rid of feelings of loneliness do not really succeed in filling up the emptiness they feel within their hearts with more external activities. Too much work not only wears one out but also makes one lose focus in his mind and heart. How can one's work therefore satisfy the inner longings of one's heart? When can work ease one's pain of loneliness and boredom?

When work is done with more heart than muscle—putting lots of love in every ounce of sweat or in every task thinking more of the good of others than that of one's welfare—it pleases one's heart. When the pain and suffering at work is accepted wholeheartedly and not grudgingly, and above all, borne in union with the sacrifice of Jesus, work becomes a loving companion which fills the heart with great satisfaction. (E-mail the author at mfv@skyinet.net)

Gospel-Mark. 15: 1-39

And at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

REFLECTIONS
FOR THE
WORKING SOUL

Betrayal by a superior

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

FEW THINGS CAN BE MORE heartbreaking at the workplace than betrayal of trust. Particularly when this involves a superior. Being betrayed by a peer or being gossiped about by your subordinates is more or less ordinary, even to be expected in some workplaces. In fact, certain professions or industries thrive on gossip and betrayal, sad to say. But for a boss—and a most trusted one at that—to pull the rug from under your feet, to deny you in public, and

then to make you appear a fool, a liar or a schemer...? That should give you a sense of being abandoned beyond words.

It happened to Cathy, a workplace whiz and a company "presidentiable" at age 33 who was pirated by (vice president) Mr. Sonora. The latter soon fell out of grace but his recruit Cathy continued to perform excellently, a fact that indirectly gave him credit for the asset that Cathy had become to the company. Then the company changed president; Mr. Sonora regained his



power position and for reasons undisclosed put his own protégé on top of his hit list. A not-so-subtle hate campaign was launched, obviously designed to force Cathy to resign. Everybody asked, "Why, of all people...?"—especially Cathy who was shocked beyond belief. What would you do if you were in her place?

If Jesus himself could feel so desolate on the Cross and cry out for being forsaken by God

Himself, how much more us humans struggling to survive in a highly competitive environment? But there's a way to gracefully yield to the moment's pain—follow Jesus' example of forgiving persecutors and loving enemies—for in the darkest hours, God is at work within us. If this is hard to believe, just ask yourself what happened three days after Jesus died on the cross. (E-mail the author at teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

Career transitions

PEOPLE AT WORK AND THE Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development (CORD) partner to listen to the heartbeats of working people through this People at Work Pulse. The results of this poll will be published the following month. To quicken your response rates, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ateneo CORD will be giving gift packages to two respondents to be drawn from those who replied for the month. Winners from last month's survey are: **Erlinda Dienzo and ER Velez** (Please contact Philippine Daily Inquirer at 897-8808 local 554 to claim your prizes).



reers has been influenced by the following factors. Rank 1 to 5 with 1 being the most important consideration.

- Personal values and interests
- Greater income potential and opportunities
- Dissatisfaction with current job
- Need time for family
- Others

5. In changing careers, I have done or plan to do the following activities. Check all that applies.

- Talk with family, friends and acquaintances
- Search for career opportunities in field of interest
- Attend further studies
- Consult a career counselor
- Others

6. I may not be able to pursue my desire or plan to change careers because of the following reasons. Check all that applies.

- Economic or monetary conditions
- Lack of experience in field of interest
- Advice of family and friends
- Age
- Others

1. How long have you been working in your present career? Indicate number of years

2. Are you satisfied with your current career?
a. Yes, I am satisfied with my current career.
b. No, I am not satisfied.

3. Are you planning on making a career change or transition?
a. Yes, I am actively seeking a career change.
b. Yes, I plan to have a career change but not right now.
c. I haven't made up my mind yet.
d. No, I have no plans.

4. My decision to change ca-

Name: _____ Age: _____ Status: _____
Gender: _____ Nature of the Job: _____ Position: _____
Company name: _____ Industry: _____ No. of years working: _____
Tel/Mobile/E-mail: _____

Mail this form to: People at Work Pulse, Ateneo Center for Organization Research and Development, 2nd flr. Hoffer Building, Social Development Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Or fax to 426-6065, e-mail ateneocord@admu.edu.ph or text answers to 0920-8319522. Write: topic 1.(answer), 2. (answer), etc., name, gender, age, status, position, address, contact numbers or e-mail.

Retired English teacher wants to work in a call center

I AM 68 YEARS OLD, AND A retired English teacher. I have a master's degree in Education, major in English as a Second Language. I taught English Grammar and Composition to high school students for 10 years, and English Speech and Writing to college students for 28 years. Right now, I teach English part-time in the college level in the school where I retired three years ago.

I am healthy and energetic. Since I am proficient in the English language, both oral and written, what is the possibility of my being employed by a call center?
Ms Retired-But-Not-Yet-Tired

Thank you for your letter which, quite possibly, expresses the need of many retirees like you who are still able to work, and want to keep on working so that they can live their lives to the fullest.

I forwarded your e-mail to recruitment managers of five call centers. All of them have the same reply: Why not? They have no age requirement for call center agents (inbound and/or outbound or telemarketers), which are the entry positions open for interested persons, regardless of age, education and gender. Your age, status and teaching experience will not entitle you to special considerations. Although you have had considerable teaching experience, the position of trainer or team leader requires successful working experience as customer service representative (CSR) and/or telemarketer.

On the other hand, would a retiree like you want to work at a call center? Let me give you some important data about the work ethic and unique culture of the call center world. In 2004, I interviewed several

ASK YOUR
CAREER
COUNSELOR
Josie O.
Santamaria

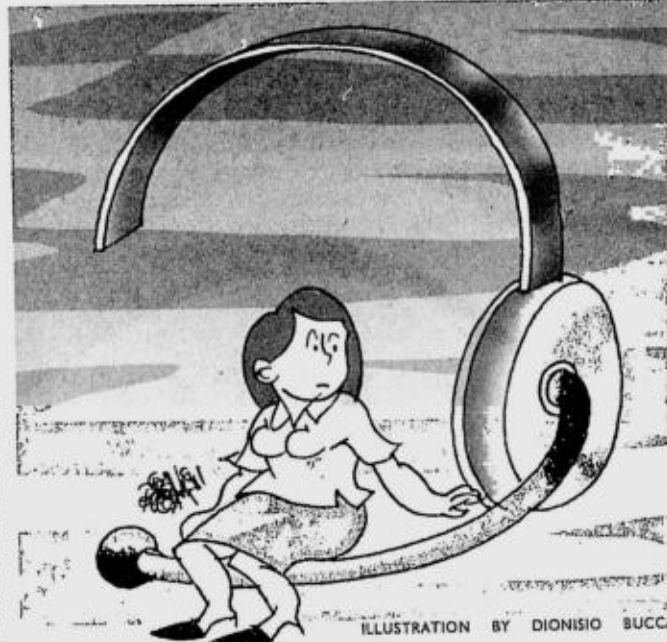


CSRs and telemarketers, team leaders and recruitment managers to enable me to respond to some readers of People at Work of the Philippine Daily Inquirer who wanted to know about careers in the call center industry.

Proficiency in English does not only refer to speaking and writing with correct grammar, but also speaking like an American. The CSR and telemarketer talk to Americans and their callers are Americans living in the USA. These Americans think that the CSR/telemarketer they are talking to is an American situated in the USA. It's important that the CSR or telemarketer speaks with the American "twang" or slang and knows the American culture. This is a "must" for all involved in marketing and sales.

Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) are the frontliners who directly serve customers by responding directly to people who call, or send e-mail and chat with them online. Most of the time, CSRs answer questions and respond to complaints about the products or services their clients are selling or providing. A CSR receives a minimum of 60 to 70 calls a day, and a maximum of 100 to 120 calls, usually before and after a US holiday, or on a Friday or a Monday. Most calls are made by dissatisfied or frustrated customers who can use language offensive to the senses.

Outbound agents or telemarketers contact prospective clients and are expected to translate every call into a sale. They are given a



daily quota in terms of a minimum number of successful sales per day. A telemarketer is expected to have about 50 to 60 closed sales a month; this figure is translated into daily and weekly closed sales.

In addition, a CSR or telemarketer must be able to type at least 25 words per minute, and proficient in basic computer programs such as word processing, e-mail, chatting, accessing the Internet and the like. The agent must document every call made or received; thus, the requirement of a minimum typing speed.

Your being in good health and being energetic is a "big plus" factor because you will surely be assigned the graveyard shift which is any time from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. The graveyard shift is the bane of call center agents. It is usually cited as

the cause of high turnover among frontliners in the call center industry. This shift takes a toll on the health of a person, particularly so if this person is an elderly like you, robs them of a normal life style and affects their quality of life and family relationships.

(To be continued next week.)
(Ms Santamaria is president of Career Systems, Inc. and has a Ph.D. in psychology and is a practicing psychologist, counselor, management consultant, executive coach and mentor. She has authored the following books: "Career Counseling: Cases and Techniques," "Life/Career Planning Workbook," "Managing Work and Career," and "Managing Your Career To The Top," all of them available at popular bookstores. Visit www.careersystems.com.ph.)

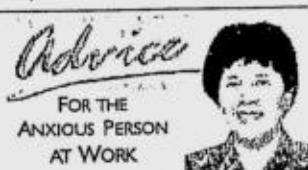
'I don't have a regular job and I'm pregnant!'

By Tita Datu Puangco

I HAVE JUST READ YOUR article on encouraging people to start working to find solutions. Well, that's great because you encourage people to act, not just sit down and be mindless of others. I wish everyone were just as kind to pregnant women.

I have been looking for a job that would help me in my situation at present. I am on the family way. Unfortunately, my immediate family doesn't know about my condition but they will find out sooner or later. I am hoping they won't find out sooner so I can be out of the house by the time they find out.

My mother isn't like other doting grandmothers who would gladly take in grandchildren so that their daughters won't hire nannies. That's why I'm not telling my mother, my sister and my



brother about my pregnancy for the meantime. I know they will be furious when they find out.

But the problem is I don't have a regular job at the moment and employers don't want to hire pregnant women. Perhaps, employers don't want to spend for maternity leaves.

My plan is to have a job, leave the house and rent my own place. I want to handle this situation by myself. But it seems that a permanent job isn't available for me right now. Another problem is my age, I know the hiring age is only up to 35. But since I am a college graduate, I am hopeful that there are still employ-

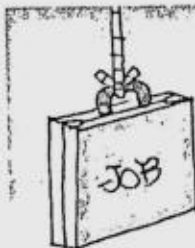
ers out there who are willing to take in applicants my age.

It's a pity that when people find out you're pregnant, that becomes a hindrance to getting a job. I hope employers change their thinking about pregnant women and accept that a pregnant woman can manage a job even in her delicate situation for as long as the job suits her. I hope that people, employers for that matter, will give pregnant women a chance to prove themselves at work.

By the way, I'm applying to different companies as a writer (I can write feature articles) or as a transcriber for audio transcriptions.

Jobless and Pregnant

Thank you for your letter. I can empathize with your situation. I ask myself what I would do in your place. As you mentioned, so, why not tell your mother about it this early? She may get angry, scold and berate you, but she cannot turn you out in the streets.



She may argue that you know better than get pregnant at this stage when you are without work. Take courage and bear everything in silence.

Why? Because the life of the baby within you is precious. The baby has greater value than all the other materialistic or practical considerations you can think of. So protect that life within you with all the care that a mother can give. The sooner you are able to unload the burden of your family not knowing your condition the better for you. My advice is for you to stay in your family residence and take care of the baby.

The second issue is your absence of a job. You would need money to support you and the child. As you



mentioned, now that you are pregnant, it would be difficult to get a regular job. But you can do part-time work and work you can do at home. Or press the father of your baby for child support.

Here are some ideas. You can work as an insurance or a pre-need company agent. You can do telemarketing from the house. These are in addition to what you earlier mentioned like writing fea-

ture articles. You can also edit a company bulletin or magazine. If you are good in written and oral English, you can do part-time teaching or give tutorial services. Tell your friends about your need and brainstorm with them what is possible.

At this point, I wish to invite our readers to help our pregnant friend by suggesting ideas or by helping her find some work she can do from the home that would not be physically strenuous. I have always counted on our readers with the capacity and capability to come forward and help.

Meantime, I pray that God in His goodness will help you find the right path in your current dilemma. Have courage and continue to pray.

(Ms Puangco is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a training and consulting company specializing in strategy management, leading change, human resource systems, leadership and enterprise training. For your letters/feedback, kindly e-mail advice@ancillaedc.com.ph, or fax 892-2902. For other inquiries, please call 892-2895, 892-2896 or 892-2898.)

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INQUIRER COMICS *Sunday*

APRIL 9, 2006

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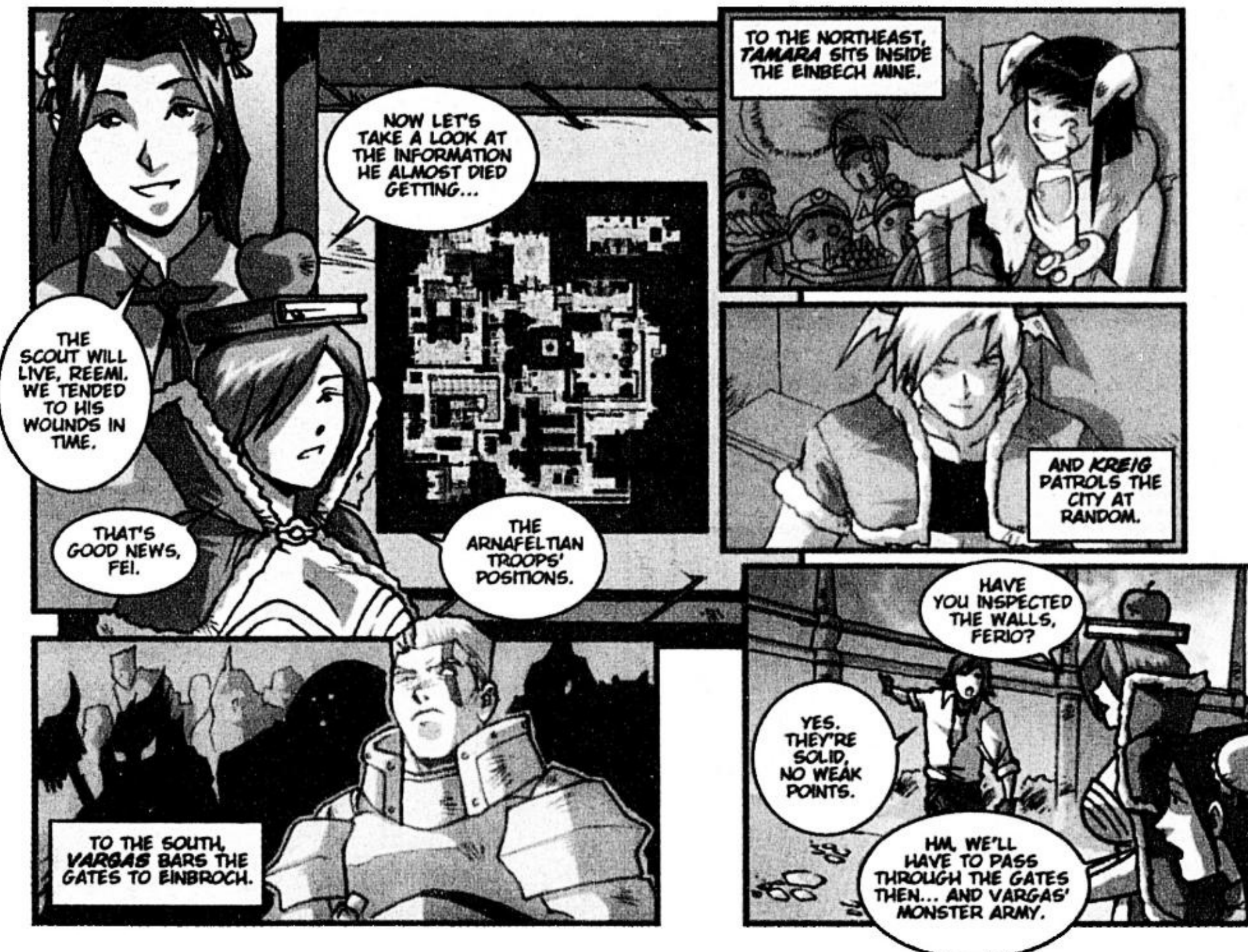
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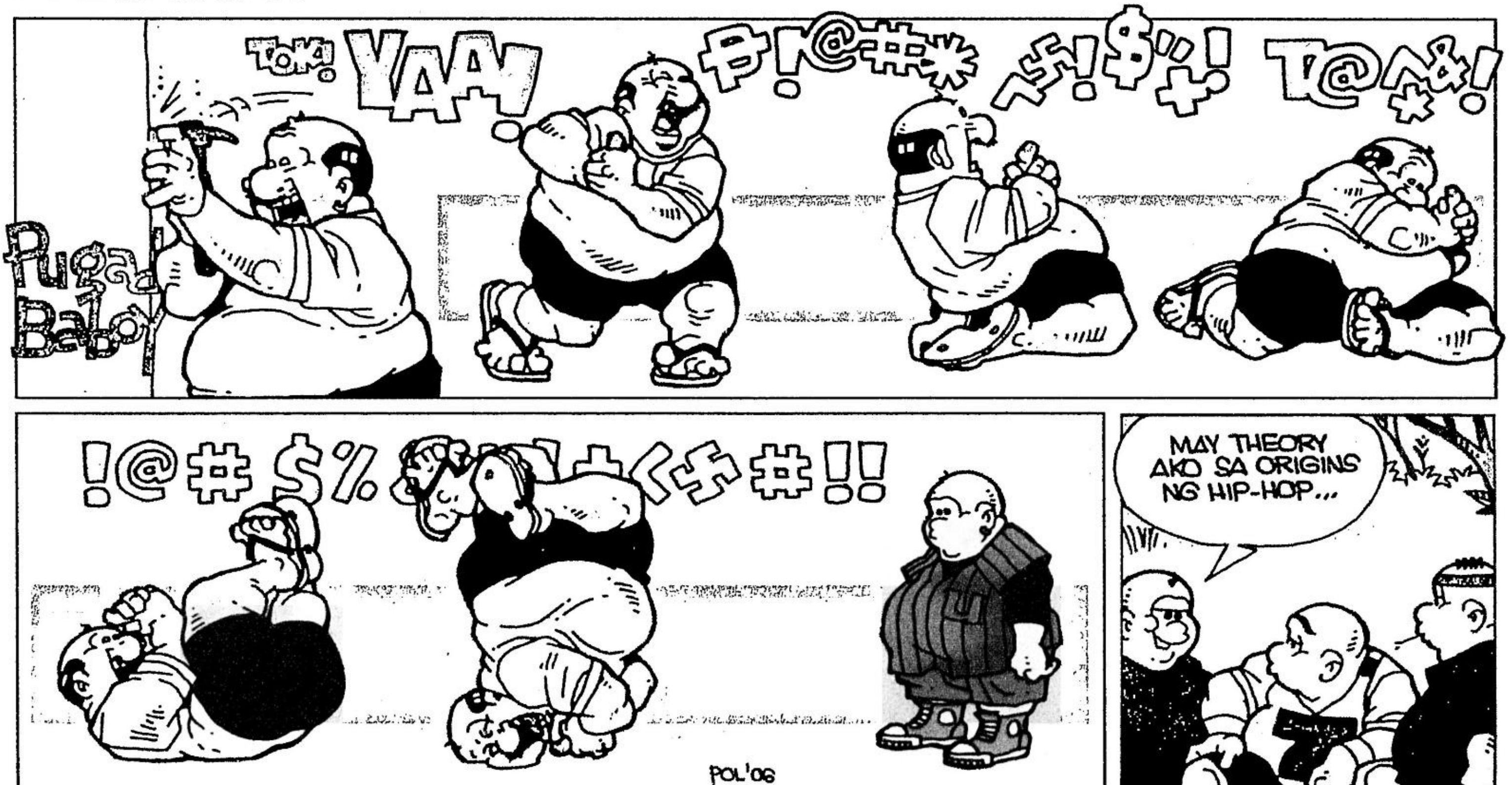
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BY LEVEL UP GAMES



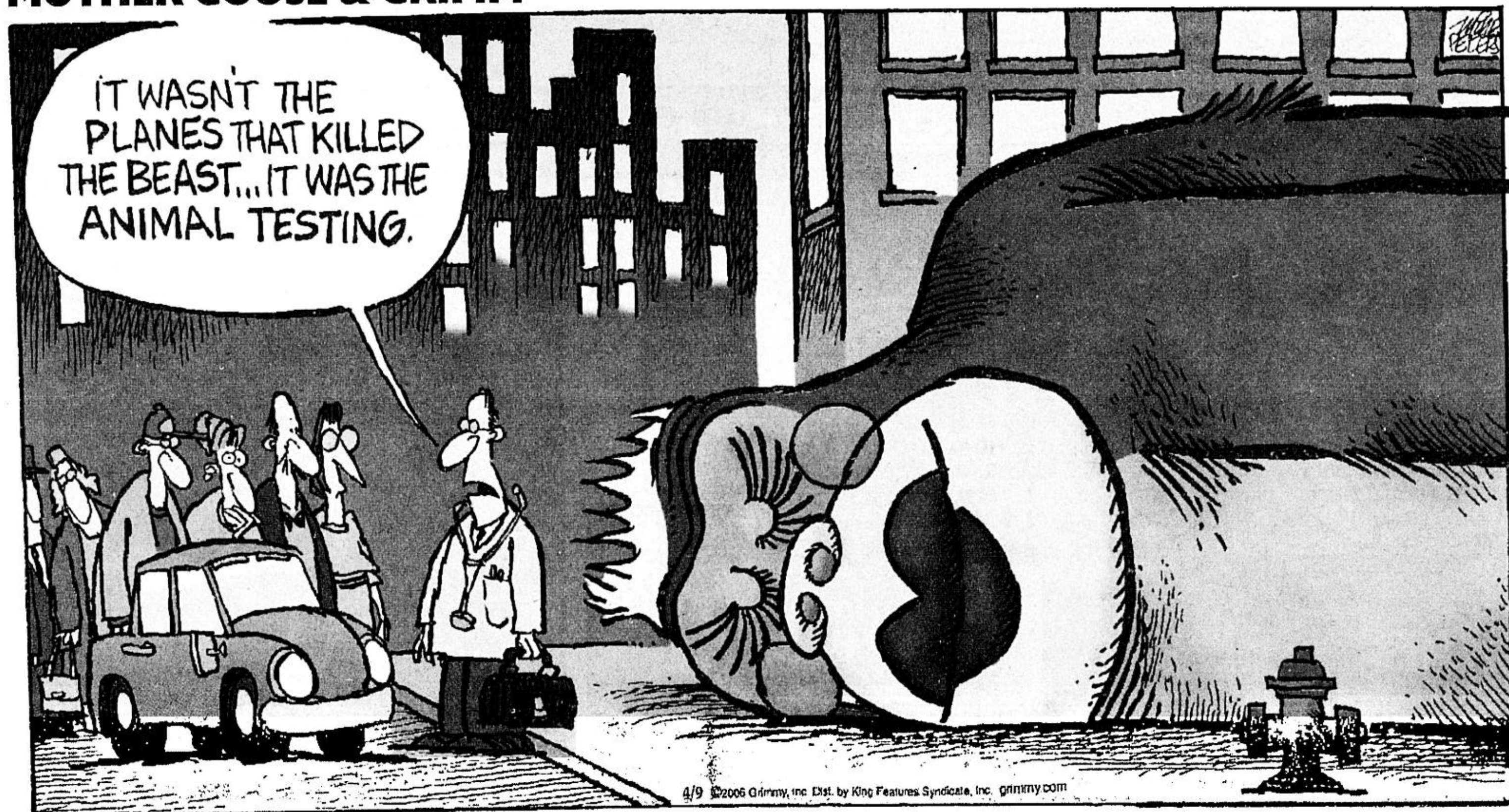
PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



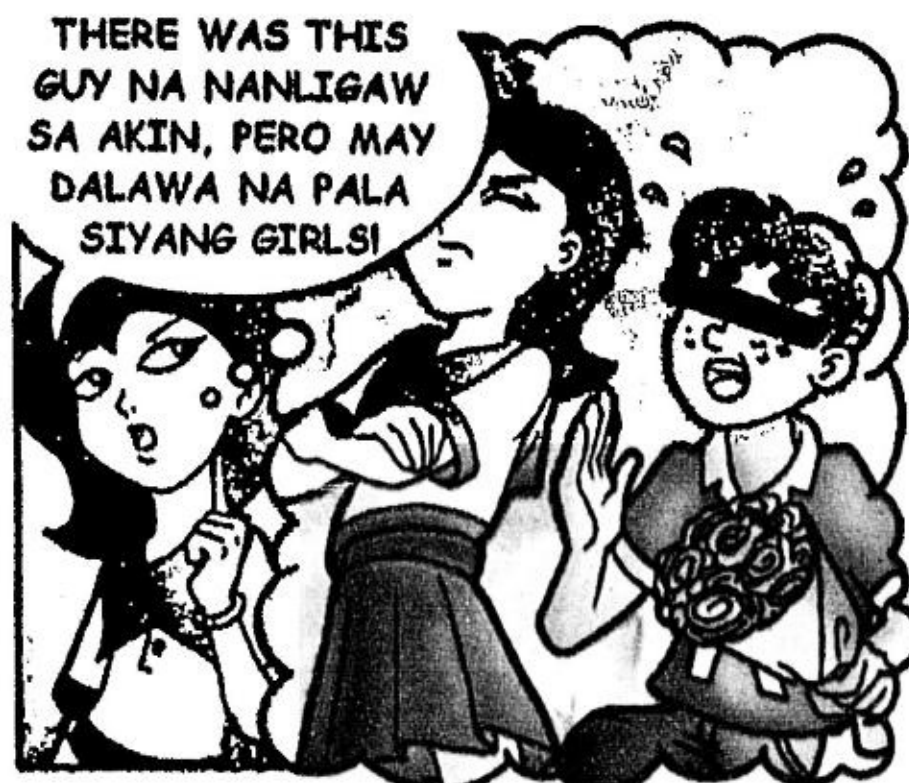
ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN



INDAY WANDA

BY BLOG CALIGUIA



MOOMOO HUNTERS

BY MANGO COMICS

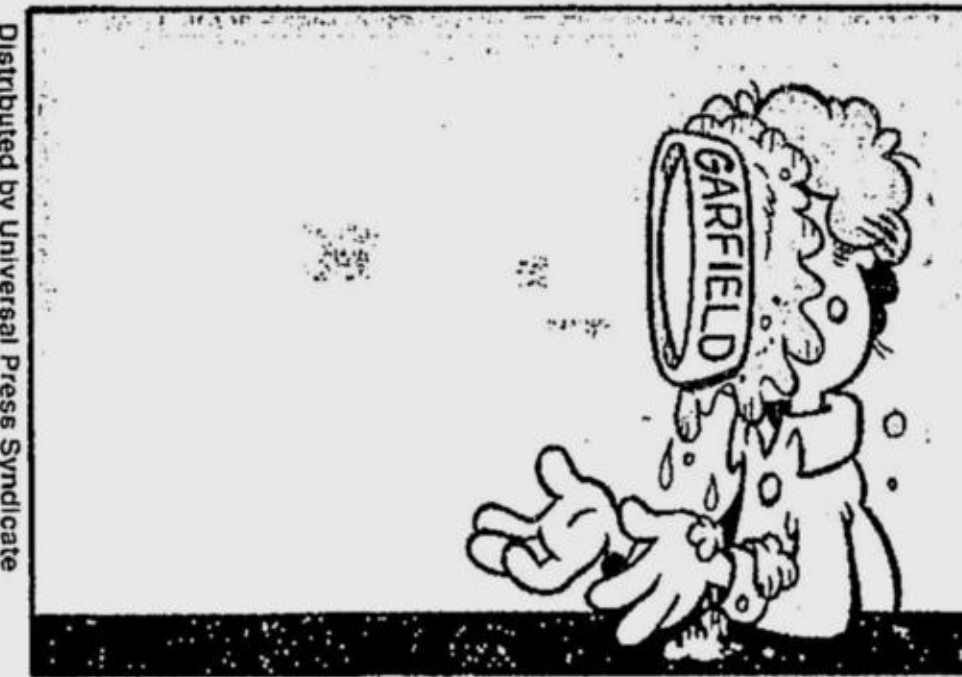


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BY JIM DAVIS



FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO



April 9, 2006

sunday INQUIRE R magazine

GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

by Eric S. Caruncho
photographs by Romy Homillada

Young singer-songwriter
Barbie Almalbis has
found God, love and a
more personal musical
voice after two successful
bands, nasty rumors and
nearly a decade in the
business. Could it be all
the positive stuff she's
been reading?

To page 2

It's a sweet new season,

"A rare and memorable book."

according to the

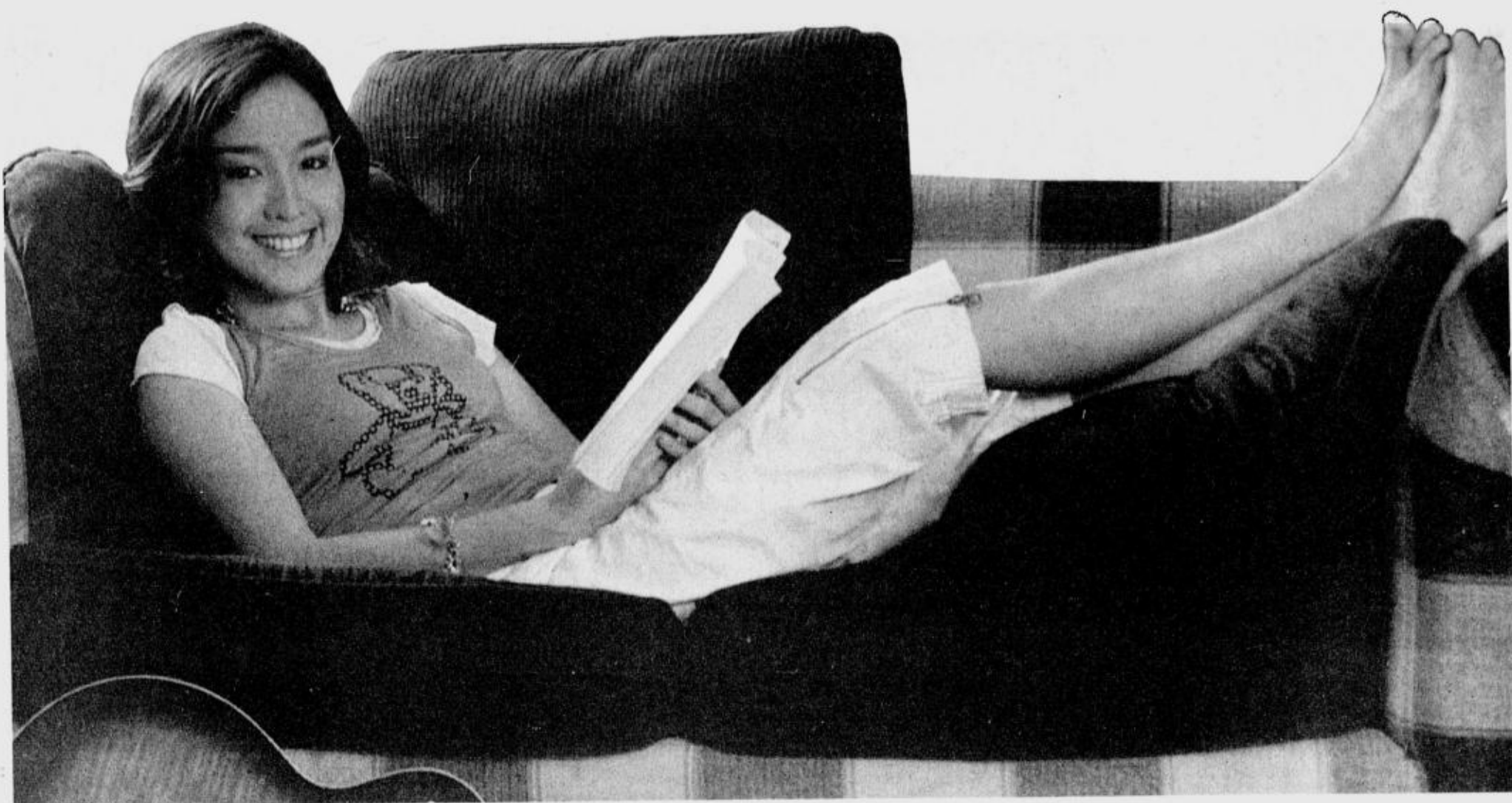
Author of *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Chre ti*

Nari

Book of Barbie

Hair and make-up
by Nick Diaz
Styling by Raul
Diaz Nisperos
Accessories by
Phanie Siatan
Clothes by Lulu
Castagnette

The Summer Reading Issue



Barbie ...from page 1

IT'S BEEN a sweet year so far for Barbie Almalbis.

"It's a new season for me," says the petite singer-songwriter, who only last June announced, much to the dismay of fans, that she was disbanding Barbie's Cradle after six years and three albums together.

Although the band's valedictory, an anthology called "Barbie: The Singles," has been out for less than a year, last week Barbie released "Parade," her first official solo album.

The upbeat title would seem to suggest that it really was time to leave the Cradle.

"It's hard to explain," she says. "It wasn't a career move. It wasn't because we were fighting or anything. It wasn't the music."

If something's not broke, why fix it?

A few speculated that it might have something to do with religious belief: Barbie has been a card-carrying Christian for the last five years, her erstwhile bandmates perhaps less so. But she insists it wasn't that, either.

Leap of faith

"It was more a leap of faith," she continues. "I wanted to take a new direction, to start something new. It was something I was praying for."

It didn't take long for her prayers to be answered.

"In two weeks, things started falling into place," she says. She hooked up with her current manager Tommy Tanchanco, who had been the manager of her first band, the Hungry Young Poets, nearly a decade ago. Tanchanco also manages Kitchie Nadal and runs 12 Stone Records, an indie label. (Coincidentally, he and Kitchie are also members of Barbie's congregation.) She also found an old bandmate, the Hungry Young Poets' drummer Franklin Benitez, as well as a new bass player.

"It's funny, it's like things just went full circle," she says. "Almost as if it was planned."

On another front, a three-year friendship with a fellow church member recently ripened into something else: agape has blossomed into eros, as it were. If nothing else, her current relationship should finally dispel any rumors about her gender.

"I have no idea where it came from," she says about that piece of gossip. "One time I had a gig with Aiza (Seguerra), the next thing I know everyone was talking about it."

Not that it's a big deal, especially in Barbie's current scheme of things.

"It's hard to keep explaining yourself," she says. "Basta, God knows my heart, and I just have to keep on moving."

Although she wears her Christianity on her sleeve, she wears it lightly, so she has been spared the usual stereotyping that plagues other "Christian rockers."

"From the beginning music was always a very personal expression, so whatever I'm learning and experiencing finds its way into my music," she says.

Only girl

Born in 1977, Barbie grew up in Roxas City, Capiz and went to school in Iloilo.

"Most of my friends, my cousins and my brother, were all guys. I was the only girl, so I was always left behind when they wanted to do guy stuff. That's when I picked up the guitar, and started writing songs."

She came to Manila for college, but instead found a city in the midst of a music explosion. She was only a couple of years into her business management course at De La Salle University when the muse called, and she joined another singer and songwriter, Ricci Guran-go, to form the Hungry Young Poets. The band had been gigging for less than a year when it was snapped up by a major label in 1997, just before the "alternative music" bubble burst. The following year, she formed the even more popular Barbie's Cradle after Hungry Young Poets called it quits, and before she knew it, she was in the music business full time.

With Barbie's personal lyrics and intimate delivery, Barbie's Cradle seemed to appeal to the more sensitive, introspective end of the youth market. The band was prolific, recording three albums in almost as many years.

But in spite of her outward success, Barbie was experiencing what she now recognizes as a spiritual crisis.

"I was in the midst of my music career, and my life was good," she recalls. "If there was any problem it was only with my relationships. But I fell into a depression that wouldn't go away. I guess being an artist you become so

emotional, it goes up and it goes down. The things that used to comfort me, even music, didn't comfort me anymore."

"I used to talk about God with my friends," she continues. "But at that time in my life I was really desperate to know. It was a matter of life and death to me if God was real or not. I really needed to know. That was five years ago, and it was a big turning point in my life."

Serendipitously, a radio station had been holding a contest where listeners were asked to write poems for their favorite musicians. The author of the best poem would get a date with the musician of his/her choice. A guy named Jun had won a date with Barbie, and after their dinner together, he gave her a book as a parting gift.

"It was called 'Angels On Assignment,'" she recalls. "He had found it in a thrift shop. It was a spiritual book about a guy who talked to angels and stuff. It moved me to tears. At that time in my life, I needed to hear the things he was saying. I had so many questions about God. It was a very desperate time in my life. 'God, if you're real, I want to know you.' I wanted to know how He felt about me."

Falling into place

The universe had conspired to put that book in her hand. It seemed like the answer she was waiting for. Soon after, she found her congregation, and things started to fall into place.

"As a writer, you just want to let your heart out, to be truthful," she says. "Everything has an impact on my life, I try to live it and it comes out in my writing."

It comes as no surprise to learn that her reading tends toward the "inspirational." She was never a big reader, she admits. Even in grade school, when her classmates went ga-ga over "Sweet Valley High" girly romances, she never managed to finish one.

"The only books I finish are the ones I really love," she says.

"One of them was called 'Passion For Jesus' by Mike Bickle. I'm into a lot of autobiographies—I like real stories about real people."

"There's also this book called 'No Compromise,' written by a guy named Keith Green—he was a musician who died in the '80s. This guy just laid down his whole life for God, his passion for what he believed in is really inspiring."

"A famous book among my friends is 'Captivating' by John and Stacy Eldredge. It's a book about women. After I read it, I gave one to my mom and to my sister. It talks about your identity as a woman—how to enjoy your role as a woman the way God created you. The views are also very biblical so I trust that it works."

Breaking mindsets

"John Eldredge also wrote a book called 'Wild At Heart.' It's about guys, and it's a really big seller."

"Joel Osteen wrote a book called 'Your Best Life Now.' It's about how to break mindsets—sometimes we think too small. It's also biblical, so I know it really works."

Barbie's current reading?

One's a management book called "17 Essential Qualities Of A Team Player" by John C. Maxwell.

"I just graduated with a degree in Business Management last year from De La Salle," she says. "After Barbie's Cradle started, I couldn't take the schedules so I left school. I thought I was never going to go back, but two years ago, I did, and I finished the course little by little."

The other is "The Four Loves" by C.S. Lewis.

"That one's a bit different from the books I've been reading," she says. "It's more poetry, about discovering the four kinds of love—friendship, romantic love, love between parents and children, stuff like that. When I read 'The Four Loves' it was a feast for me, I loved it so much."

It's hard to believe that Barbie's been around for nearly a decade now, partly because she looks no different from when she started in 1996, but also because artistic longevity is an increasingly rare phenomenon, specially now in the age of the disposable celebrity.

Perhaps because she's not afraid to grow, Barbie's fans have grown right along with her.

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In some imagined place you stand
Where the street goes blind
Dressed in red in the early moon
At five in the afternoon.

No dogs. Your house like a chess
Tower
Watches
As if it sees me, as if I am there

Though a butterfly weaves
Itself into the scene
Better, not far from what has been
For days a pile of leaves.

And in the air too the smell
Of rain that fell
In your dream. A dimwit
I still wonder how you did it—

Stopping the rain
In mine
Where you were
The traveler

That you might look
For this fruit that alone took
After the tree
That bore it: solitary

And pick it up, that from your hand
Now it might come to the end
Of its own, truer, journey. Stillest life.
The pilgrim

Fruit
On the rim
Of the absolute.
They say you are the wife

I never had.
Unborn. Or else, being much younger,
Someone I knew as a lad.
They say you are my mother.

How can either be?
How can anything not be?
I am ancient of days enough
Believe this, that you are a photograph

Of me, one click
And it is night
Though nothing else might
Be altered, just God's trick

Borrowed to argue that to look
Is to be angelic:
You are a Raphael or Grunewal
Where silence is all.

Cesar Ruiz Aquino

ahead

Get comfortable with the best books to cozy up with this summer

photographs by Rudy Esperas

It is the perfect time. The books await, lying in the cramped comfort of the darkness in handbags and backpacks, just longing to raise their opened pages to the imperious sun. The books are ready. Let the **Sunday INQUIRER Magazine** provide the dead reckoning for your literary journeys as we present the season's most remarkable reads in our annual Summer Reading Issue. Time to open up.

Ruel S. De Vera

FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

FICTION

"The Sea"

by John Banville
Picador

THIS quiet, moody tale from Irish novelist Banville won last year's Man Booker Prize, and the long, flowing paragraphs alone, overflowing with sensuous sentences, seem worth it. After his wife's painful death from illness, Max Morden travels back to Ballyless, a seaside town from his childhood. There is a sadness mixed into the everyday observations from Max, particularly when he trains his curious gaze on his strange neighbors, the Grace family. It is the time he spends with the remarkably different twins Myles and Chloe that holds the key to his realizations. "The Sea" is breathtaking in its lushness and deserves to be read slowly, page by precious page.

RSDV

"Bangkok Tattoo"

by John Burdett, Bantam Press
MEET Bangkok police detective Som-

chai Jitpleechep, half-Thai and half-American, who muses on Buddhist philosophy as he navigates the seamy side streets of Bangkok's red light district. The cast of characters in "Bangkok Tattoo," the second in what one hopes will be a long-running series, includes an opium-smoking CIA burnout, the star attraction in the brothel owned by Somchai's mother (herself a retired prostitute), his partner who is on the threshold of transforming himself into a she, his police colonel boss who runs a profitable drug-trafficking operation, and a crazed Yakuza tattoo artist who may or may not be the killer he's after. Burdett's thrillers are to run-of-the-mill detective fiction what Thai cuisine is to fast-food: an exotic, spicy and addictive alternative once you get used to the chillies.

Eric S. Caruncho

"Anansi Boys"

by Neil Gaiman, William Morrow

A SEQUEL in spirit to "American Gods," Gaiman's novel takes the readers on another intricately intriguing road trip through mythology, this time with Fat Charlie Nancy, son of the trickster god Anansi, playing point. After his father's

death, Charlie must track down his long-lost brother Spider, who has stolen some of Anansi's powers. The wired landscape of oddball travelers and uncharted territory recalls the packed pantheon of Gaiman's "The Sandman." Mythological mayhem ensues, making this a must-read. It's epic, funny and engrossing all at the same time.

RSDV

"Tokyo"

by Mo Hayder, Bantam Books

A YOUNG English woman winds up working as a hostess in a Tokyo club frequented by gangsters, while on a dangerous mission to dig up the rumored elixir of their ancient, wheelchair-bound Yakuza boss. The strange cure is the price demanded by a university professor in exchange for a film on the 1937 Nanking Massacre that the girl needs to prove her sanity. This fast-paced novel moves back and forth between the horrors and devastation of war and the equally edge-of-one's-seat instances of cruelty, mutilation and cunning in Tokyo's underworld as the girl tracks down the exotic elixir. Get ready to turn to toast as you completely forget the sun and ignore the sea as you grapple with yourself, trying not to peek into the novel's gut-wrenching, yet satisfying conclusion.

Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz

"The 5th Horseman"

by James Patterson and Maxine Paetro, Warner Books

A FAST and easy read, perfect for waiting it out in airport lounges and deck chairs. Someone's killing off pa-

tients at the San Francisco Municipal Hospital just when they're recuperating, and young girls—fully dressed in expensive designer rags—are turning up dead inside cadillacs. Is the hospital covering up for its staff to shield its reputation in an explosive court battle, or was it an honest case of mistaken medication? Who have been murdering the women and why are they posed like mannequins inside expensive cars? If you're not too particular about some loose ends, you're bound to enjoy this medical and courtroom thriller. It's like munching peanuts while watching the games: mindless pleasure, but why not?

PAC

To page 4

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Read...from page 3

"Brokeback Mountain"

by Annie Proulx, Scribner

IT'S satisfying to read a short story after seeing the acclaimed and controversial movie, and realize how screenwriters Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana have stayed faithful to the words of original author Annie Proulx. They knew well enough to leave a good thing alone, down to the now-famous "I wish I knew how to quit you" line, which captures the frustration of two people who can never really have what they want most. Proulx, she of the expansive views of life in Smalltown America and the big hearts that beat there, first had "Brokeback Mountain" published in *The New Yorker* magazine. But before Ang Lee brought the words to 3-D life against the breathtaking landscape of Wyoming, the story was already a winner. The book starts with an already sad and solitary Ennis, left with nothing but dreams of Jack and hoping to "renew the old, cold time on the mountain when they owned the world and nothing seemed wrong." Gay or straight, this must be one of the most straightforward love stories I've ever read—which makes it all the more powerful and outstanding. A fast read, but wonderful anyway. For the straight guys out there who are still afraid to see the movie, use this to break you in and realize why art is truly universal.

Ally B. Honasan

"Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt"

by Anne Rice, Alfred A. Knopf

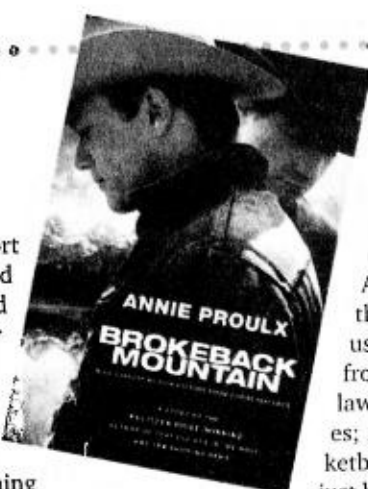
NO matter what you say about Anne Rice, the fact is, the woman can tell a dramatic story; even her erotic literature has a semblance of literary style. So when she decided to take on the world's most controversial subject for a novel, people were ready to pounce, aghast that Jesus Christ should be fodder for the same woman who made complicated epics out of the lives of vampires and witches. But set aside any fears and biases, and take this as she calls it—a novel. And as a fleshed-out account of the early days of Jesus, from the time he was a boy of 7 to the finding in the Temple, when he gets a first glimpse of his accountability to a power higher than Mom and Dad, it's hard to put down. It's fascinating to imagine what life must have been like for this boy, who unwittingly cursed a playmate to death when he was 7, only to bring him back to life. The novel ends with the boy's realization and acceptance of his mission on earth, after his mother explains the story of his birth to him. We all know how everything turns out, but this is one time when the ending doesn't spoil the progress of the story and Rice's imaginative presentations of scenes in the young Christ's life.

ABH

"Little Earthquakes"

by Jennifer Weiner, Washington Square Press

WE FIRST reviewed Weiner's "Good In Bed" for SIM some years ago, a cute hammock-reading piece about a girl whose journalist ex-boyfriend uses her as fodder for his column and sends her on a life-changing quest for herself. Looks like her work may be echoing her own life trajectory, as Weiner (who, according to the cover notes, now has a husband and a daughter) writes about "the journey of new motherhood." Somehow, though, after having a ball with "Good In Bed" heroine Annie Shapiro, Weiner's attempt to handle multiple characters leaves each one a little shallow and not very original. She



traces a month-by-month year in the life of mothers and mothers-to-be Becky, Kelly, Ayinde and Lia, and throws them into the usual stew of problems, from pushy mothers-in-law to couch potato spouses; Ayinde's unfaithful basketball star husband should just have been called "Kobe."

Even an attempt at drama, in how Lia copes with her baby's death, is predictable, and made a little off-putting by the fact that she's the only one whose story is told in first person, so it irritates rather than engages. In fact, it's the attempt to tell too many stories at the same time, rather than telling one or two stories very well, that burdens this book. Still, light and useful enough to have along while waiting for your flight out of town.

ABH

"Now is the Time to Open Your Heart"

by Alice Walker, Phoenix Books

ENOUGH already! Walker's celebrated novel, "The Color Purple" (which became a Steven Spielberg movie) recalls the Black Woman's burden—the slavery of a race and the subsequent oppression of its women by its own menfolk. In her latest novel, Walker again harks back to conquest—of the South American Indians by the Spaniards—through the main characters undergoing a midlife crisis, with the woman exploring the Amazon jungle. The jungle adventure includes encounters with shamans, bodhisattvas, ancient healer-crones, gurus and other New Age types that give the author enough opportunity to foist past-life dialogues on us that—you guessed it—chronicle the rape and plunder of indigenous Indian tribes by the White Men. As expected, the resolution of the couple's midlife crisis is found in their rediscovered connection to Mother Earth and her gift of forgiveness for the excesses of the past. Meandering and annoying.

PAC

NON-FICTION

"Secrets of Style"

by Lisa Arbetter, In Style Books

"ALL a woman needs to be chic is a raincoat, two suits, a pair of trousers and a cashmere sweater," said designer Hubert de Givenchy. The story may be a little different in this part of the globe, far away from Hollywood, but there's still a lot to be learned from this lavishly illustrated, celebrity-loaded how-to from the editors of the 10-year-old fashion mag *In Style*, which has long been more about wearing fashion than ogling it. Divided into four sections covering everything from style basics to specific items (skirts, lingerie, dresses, shirts and blouses) and even care and storage, the book provides information as well as entertainment. A section on the perfect white shirt, for example, uses vintage photos of Cybill Shepherd and Brigitte Bardot wearing their men's shirts with nonchalant style; while Audrey Hep-

burn remains the benchmark for wearing the Little Black Dress (LBD). Pinays can probably skip the sections on coats and cashmere sweaters, unless they travel to the temperate zones frequently, but everything else is an eye-opener. Like, did you know the difference between a string bikini and a high-cut Rio, or a demi-bra and a shelf bra? Neither did I.

ABH

"French Women Don't Get Fat"

by Mireille Guiliano, Vintage Books

FINALLY! In the time of the (yawn) South Beach diet, a book that doesn't tell us so much how to eat, as how to live. The author speaks with authority—she was born and raised in France before moving to America. And the gist of her message: Eating healthy is not a regimen, but a way of life into which you incorporate good attitudes and habits. The basics are so simple they boggle the mind: Eat three meals a day, at regular times, and start with a proper breakfast. Eat *peu a peu*, or little by little, and you can eat a little of everything. Eat slowly, and sitting down (hence, the famous three-hour French luncheons). Drink some wine, it's good for you and helps make the meal even more leisurely. Corollary to that, take walks and strolls (not "marches," as Guiliano calls some women's routines) and don't be afraid of stairs. In-

crease your intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts and olive oil. My hands-down favorite imperative: "Pretending...pleasures don't exist, or trying to eliminate them from your diet, will probably lead to weight gain." Thus, say yes to bread, chocolate, and other treats, but go for top quality, like traditional sugarless baguettes and fine dark chocolate. This could have been subtitled, "French women are so used to enjoying themselves that they never have to binge." All in all a fun

read, with recipes for the more domestically inclined, but with enough banter even if you skip those pages. A great gift for a gal pal or any cosmopolitan woman.

ABH

"The Bluffer's Guide to Women"

by Marina Muratore

"The Bluffer's Guide to Men"

by Anthony Mason, Oval Books

YOU don't need to be a bluffer to appreciate these slim guides to surviving the battle of the sexes. The garden variety Clueless Person—that's you and me on most occasions—can certainly use the factoids presented in the Guide to Women to figure out stuff that has baffled men for centuries. Like, why women can't read maps (because our brains are wired to chart routes by landmarks, not maps or compass); what women notice first in a man (the eyes, followed by the bottom, clothes, cash, teeth, hair); why women troop to lavatories as a group, why they feel guilty as sin all the time, how shopping affects those feel-good endorphins, how fertility hormones lower alcohol tolerance, etc. Well now, there are stuff even I didn't know till now.

On the other hand, I think I have the male of the species all figured out: the male penis comes in different sizes (well, duuh!), men can run faster than women because they have a higher concentration of hemoglobin in their system and narrower hips, men think of sex every six minutes, male drivers never ask for directions for fear of appearing

helpless, and they'd procrastinate everything except sitting down to a meal or having sex.

In all, very helpful—a good mix of sound scientific facts leavened by goofy humor.

PAC

All titles available from National Book Store.

PHILIPPINE PUBLICATIONS

FICTION

"Philippine Speculative Fiction Volume I"

edited by Dean Francis Alfaro

Kestrel IMC

A WELCOME visitation, this collection of short stories from Filipino writers delves exclusively in the realm of fantasy and science fiction, yet the pieces in "Philippine Speculative Fiction" may have evolved into a different breed somewhere in between, which is a good thing. From Ian Rosales Casocot's audacious investigation of Jose Rizal to J. Pocholo Martin B. Goitia's vision of the Filipino's future in the being Magenta, the stories here lace the future with the flavor of our past. New and old fictionists like Angelo R. Lacuesta, Gabriela Lee and Francezka C. Kwe lend their vibrant voices to this project. "To find the fantastic, we must create the fantastic," Alfaro writes in his introduction to this fantastic find.

RSDV

"Selected Stories"

by Jose Y. Dalisay Jr.

University of the Philippines Press

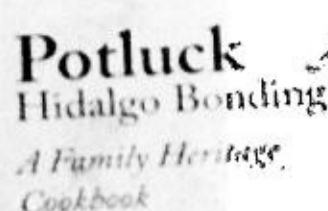
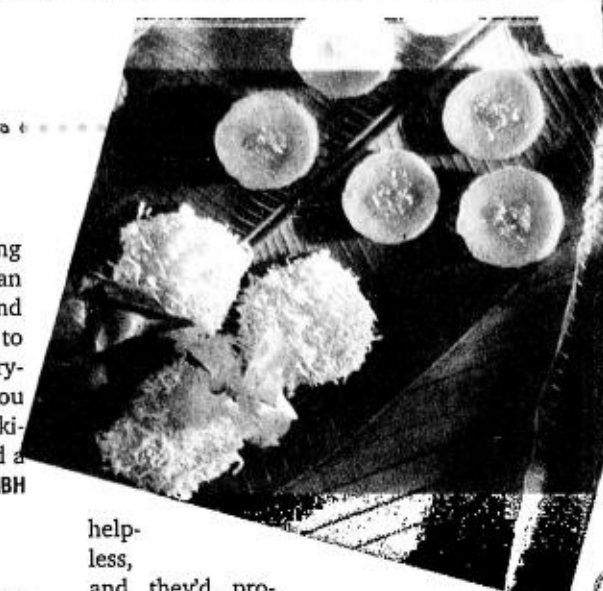
IF you've never read the great Butch Dalisay before, you will see in this collection of stories, sharp and gleaming as a polished sword, why he's won just about every possible award in this hemisphere, and several times, at that. Aside from his masterful command of the English language, it's Dalisay's ability to change voice in every story that is an utter delight, even when he's not a character in the tale. He's bitter and ravaging in the virtual love letter that is "Message to Zenocrate," throbbing with adolescent longing for the beauty next door in "Cameo," clinical and omnipotent in the Palanca award-winning play of scenes that is "The Woman in the Box," and my favorite, a dignified wild boar confronting the degradation of his habitat and the mortality of his kind in "Pig." Every story is different, whether covering a span of years or a single scene in a Cubao girlie bar, but they're also all the same—simply excellent. Read it, get lost in the words, and feel darn proud that a Pinoy can lay it on like this.

ABH

"Iskrabuk"

by Allan N. Derain, UP Press

THIS reads like a Lino Brocka movie script: gritty, textured, and pockmarked with real-life dilemmas too painful to contemplate. One story follows a messenger through his frustrating routine as he goes about his errands in the opportunistic city; another focuses on the passengers of a small-town jeepney who wrestle with their conscience over giving up their seat to a woman who had just given birth to a fish





(or so the gossip goes); then there's the man who finally allows his aging mother to tend a sari-sari store to give her something to do, and discovers to his chagrin how their greedy neighbors have taken advantage of her failing eyesight. While the stories give readers a generous glimpse of the darker side of everyday life, the author's satirical touch, the tongue-in-cheek observations and conversational Filipino make the pieces accessible enough, even entertaining. **PAC**

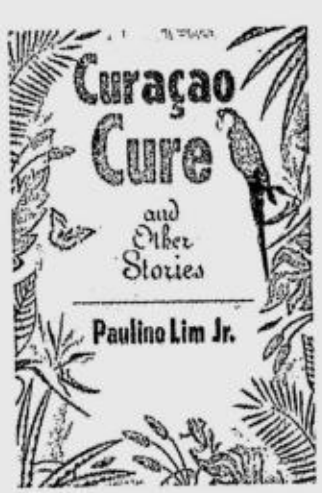
"Takod"
by David Hontiveros
Visual Print Enterprises
SOMETHING'S rotten in what was once the little settlement of Mapayapa. And now, years later, Mike Lasombra returns to this place from his past with a curious pendant around his neck. After encountering a wizened old woman who knows more than she's letting on, Mike will discover the throbbing dark secret of Mapayapa. The bloody, frightening shadow behind Mapayapa will require more of Mike than he ever imagined. All this, in straightforward horror and in allegorical manner, is stuffed into Hontiveros's compact and creepy novella. **RSDV**

"Curacao Cure and Other Stories"
by Paulino Lim, Jr.
Anvil Publishing, Inc.
FIFTEEN stories, each based on an actual incident, feeling or idea that the writer includes as a short preface to each offering. An uneven collection, with most of the stories tending to be ponderous as the author analyzes his characters' intentions, usually with a philosophical treatise on the frailties of human nature. The best picks include "Violation," which has a comfort woman detailing her ordeal as a sex slave to Japanese troops before students in an American campus; "Pining on the Love Boat," a play on both the character's name and the rediscovered longings of a middle-aged widow on a cruise, and the title story, about a homesick Filipino deck hand who discovers belatedly that his station in life entitles him only to the paid pleasures of a Curacao hotel. Handy enough to take to the beach when the sun's too hot to swim and you can't nap, either. **PAC**

"Jungle Planet and Other Stories"
by Lakambini A. Sitoy, UP Press
ONE of your best bets to keep the heat and boredom at bay this summer. This slim volume is packed with first-rate stories remarkable for their lyricism, humanity and details, as well as insights into the sinister layers that lie, like a coiled snake, beneath the relationships we take for granted. Among the unforgettable ones: a dutiful daughter, now a nurse, sees in her father's diseased body the welts that his belt had marked on her young skin many many

years ago ("Touch"); an office worker reluctantly receives the pompous activist and former lover now offering her a pre-ned plan and unwarranted guilt ("Injury Zone"); the languid seduction had turned out to be a cruel joke, so she abandons her friend in a dark forlorn area where she becomes tabloid fodder the next day ("Denial, Denial"). In all, an absorbing foray into the complicated workings of the human mind as it navigates the treacherous terrain of memory, expectations and pride. **PAC**

"A Literary Journey with Gilda Cordero Fernando"
by Sylvia Mendez Ventura
UP Press
HERE'S a thought: What if the author had collected Gilda Cordero Fernando's best stories in a reader, grouped them according to theme and given each chapter an introduction that features a capsule literary review and liberal quotes from GCF on how some of the stories derived from her colorful life?
Now that would be a book worth taking to the beach. The stories are bound to delight with their potent mix of wiles, whimsy and cultural wildfire, while the reviews can only add depth and substance to one's enjoyment. As it is, the literary journey whets the readers' appetite for the stories being described but they find, alas, that they'd have to make do with excerpts. It's like expecting a feast in true GCF fashion, but making do with chips and dips. **Bitin! PAC**



"Out of Doors"
by Ernest Superal Yee
Giraffe Books
THINK "Brokeback Mountain," except that in place of Wyoming cowboys, Wendell and Adrian are childhood friends and later, partners in an architectural firm. All about how they discovered and finally acknowledged their tentative feelings for each other, how Adrian found a succession of lovers, and the many ways one can describe male tumescence and gay lust. Really now; I'd like to meet these characters who can be unnaturally articulate about their sex life even to first-time acquaintances. Like most porn movies, the novel gets repetitive after the initial encounters and you actually feel a headache coming on. Not tonight, please. **PAC**

NON-FICTION

"Authentic Recipes from the Philippines"
Recipes by Reynaldo G. Alejandro
Photographs by Luca Invernizzi Tettoni
Periplus Editions
THIS book looks so scrumptious you can just eat it up. Indeed, if one truly eats with the eyes first, consider yourself full just by browsing through the pages and their spread of dishes so vividly photographed you can almost taste them.

More than the glossy photos however, the book stirs up the appetite not just for Filipino cuisine, but its history as well, with essays that define Filipino food, regional variations and the changing flavors of these global times. Apparently targeted to the expat Pinoy and the foreign market, the book is also particularly helpful in sourcing the most common ingredients of a typical Filipino meal, the best substitutes, and how to handle them.

The recipes are very detailed, with exact measurements, local names, cooking time and methods given, so that even amateur cooks are bound to come up with something edible, if not spectacular, with this book. For the locals, there may be few surprises: the mix of everyday and holiday dishes are common enough (*kare-kare*, *menudo*, *bulalo*, *lengua*), but the visuals are so appetizing you're bound to rush to your kitchen and whip up something, just to see if your actual dish can approximate the picture. **PAC**

"Tsinoy: The Story of the Chinese in Philippine Life" by Teresita Ang-See
Kaisa Para Sa Kaunlaran, Inc.
FROM the time the first Chinese traders began interacting with the locals to the Filipino-Chinese's involvement in everyday customs, "Tsinoy" traces the origins and development of the Tsinoy, complete with maps, rare photographs and informative sidebars. Part celebration and part encyclopedia, "Tsinoy" delves into the mindset and the obstacles faced by the pioneering Filipino-Chinese and is in itself a testament to how thoroughly integral they have become to Filipino life as we know it. **RSDV**

"Saulado: Mga Tula"
by Rebecca T. Afionuevo
UP Press
"SAULADO" means memorized, an apt title for this poetry collection that deals with the tricks played by one's memory. As the author asks in her foreword: When do memories become ruthless? When do they wound, and when do they heal? What do we remember most and why do we remember them? The tone is wistful, almost melancholy and the language difficult at times, but the images are fresh, even startling in parts. Worth a read. **PAC**

"The Road I Travelled: A Memoir"
by Gloria T. Aragon, M.D.
UP Press

MIGHT one suggest a short cut or a detour? Why not convert this into a valedictory speech for one's 75th or 80th birthday, invite all the doctors, classmates, professors and friends acknowledged here for helping the author become a pioneering and well-traveled female in the medical field, distribute copies of the speech in CD and save some trees in the process? Except for the portion on the deprivations of the war which read surprisingly well, this is one journey we'd rather skip. Reads too much like a diary with lots of medical jargon, breast-beating and back-patting. **PAC**

"Huling Ptyk: Da Art of Nonoy Marcelo" Panday Aviado, Sylvia Mayuga and Dario Marcelo, eds. Anvil
THE late Nonoy Marcelo, best known for his long-running comic strips "Tisoy" and "Ikabod," was a cultural avatar whose art reflected contemporary Philippine reality more effectively than most "serious" social critics. In "Huling Ptyk," the editors—who better than his closest friend, his ex-wife and his son?—compile articles, interviews and analyses that shed light on various facets of Marcelo's complex genius, from his unique personal language, to his experiences abroad, to his intimate relationships. Livening up the volume are copious illustrations by the maestro himself, taken from his four-decade career, which alone are worth the price of admission. It is a fitting memorial to a true Filipino original. **ESC**

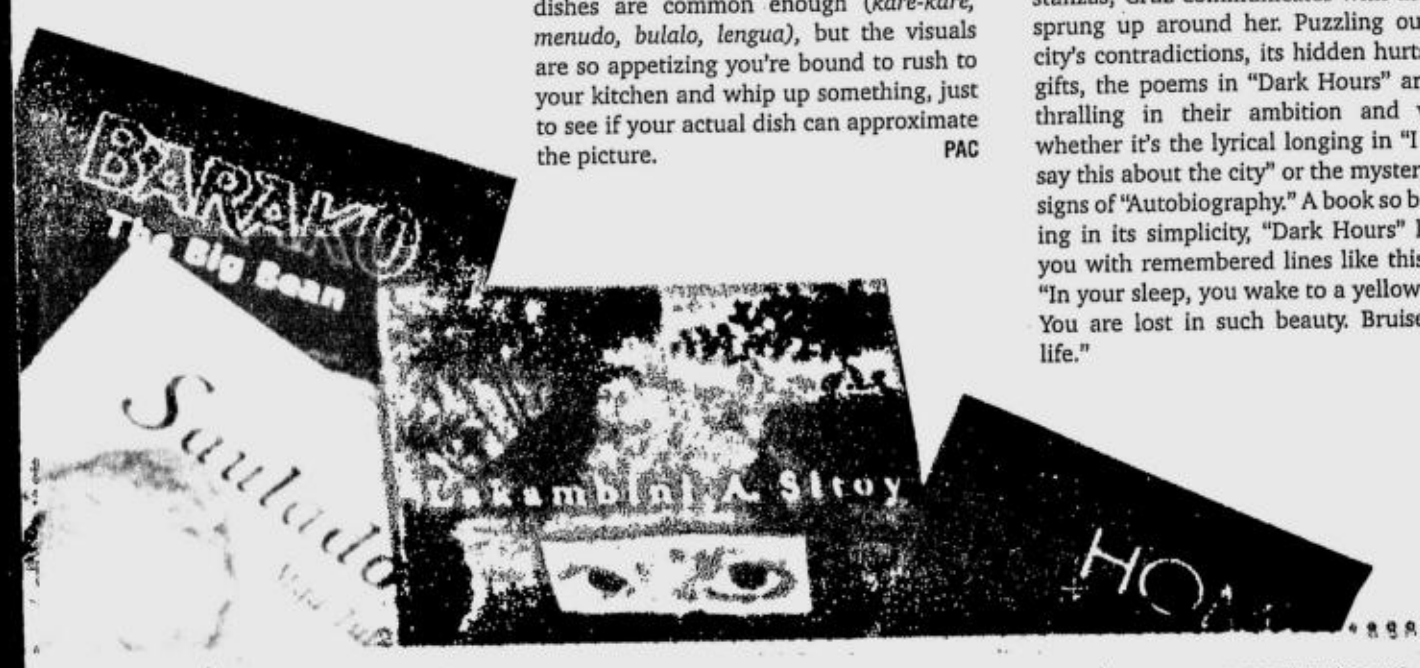
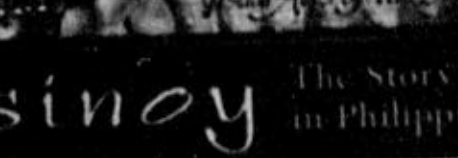
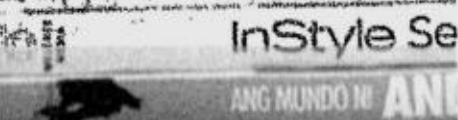
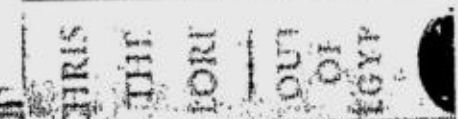
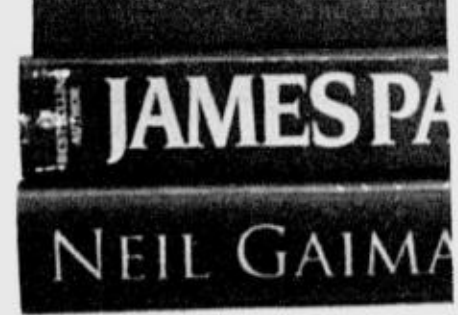
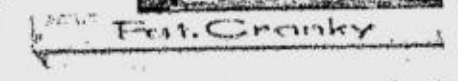
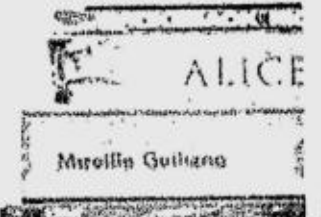
"The Cardinal's Sins, the General's Cross, the Martyr's Testimony and Other Affirmations"
by Gregorio C. Brillantes
Ateneo de Manila University Press
THE RANGE of topics in Brillantes's book will floor you, the articles sometimes contrarian, seemingly dated, but timeless in their craftsmanship and intellect. Gathering his journalistic pieces over the last four decades, "The Cardinal's Sins" showcases Brillantes's muscular prose, his capacity for finding the right angle for the most impregnable subjects. Where else will you find a book that features Marcos, Ninoy, the Santo Niño and Teilhard de Chardin? Particularly flavorful are his longer essays, such as the profoundly affecting reflection on Nick Joaquin. **RSDV**

"Dark Hours"
by Conchitina Cruz, UP Press
SPEAKING through her poems' slender stanzas, Cruz communicates with the city sprung up around her. Puzzling out the city's contradictions, its hidden hurts and gifts, the poems in "Dark Hours" are enthralling in their ambition and wiles, whether it's the lyrical longing in "I must say this about the city" or the mystery and signs of "Autobiography." A book so beguiling in its simplicity, "Dark Hours" leaves you with remembered lines like this one: "In your sleep, you wake to a yellow field. You are lost in such beauty. Bruised for life." **RSDV**

"Cagraray: A Bicol Island-World"
by Anita Feleo and David Sheniak,
with photographs by Sonny Yabao
Cagraray Environmental Protection and Development Foundation
THIS coffee-table book is a masterpiece of soft-sell packaged in a good read, although it will probably appeal most to sons and daughters of this lovely province (yours truly included). The book is a project of the Cagraray Environmental Protection and Development Foundation, whose goal is "to make the Bicolanos believe in themselves and preserve whatever nature and their forebears have given them." Indeed, there's much here that the Bicolano has to be proud of. The text is characteristic of the gallivanting writing tandem of Anita Feleo and the late David Sheniak—breezy, loaded with anecdotes and packed with encounters with people, from government bigwigs to coastal fishermen. And the artful photographs by the inimitable Sonny Yabao—need we say more? Interestingly structured from the macro (the Bicol region, people and history) to the micro (Albay and the idyllic 481-square kilometer island of Cagraray itself), it's an informative and engaging guide to Bicol that will make you want to visit—and help you understand the *joie de vivre* that Bicolanos are born with. **ABH**

"Ukkil: Visual Arts of the Sulu Archipelago"
by Ligaya Fernando-Amilbansa
ADMU Press
LIGAYA Fernando-Amilbansa is known first and foremost as a dancer and dance researcher, the most zealous proponent of the *pangalay* or traditional dance. This book, a work of formidable scholarship, also reaffirms her role as a champion of Sulu art and culture, the world she married into and embraced with much passion. The book covers seven chapters packed with information, archival photographs (many from Amilbansa's personal collection) and illustrations that demonstrate how art permeates almost every facet of life in the Sulu Archipelago, from common decorative symbols, cloth, and basketry to pottery and jewelry. The word *ukkil* refers to a common curvilinear design motif, as well as the act of carving itself. The creative process in Sulu "takes place through constant interaction with self-taught artisans," Amilbansa writes, and such personal encounters were among her cited sources for what will prove to be a definitive work; after all, she began research on it more than 20 years ago. A must for every serious student of Philippine culture and art, though definitely not an easy read. **ABH**

"Regarding Space"
by Sid Gomez Hildawa
National Commission for Culture and the Arts
EXPERIMENTATION with structure and scope is at the heart of this long overdue chapbook



For the boys and girls of summer

by Ruth L. Navarra

WHILE sun and surf are the much-anticipated highlights of a Filipino kid's summer experience, the free hours can also become a portal to discovery and dreaming. Kids can explore from their armchair or the beach blanket with these tomes.

PHILIPPINE PUBLICATIONS

"Noong Unang Panahon"

Retold by Rafaelita S. Valera
Illustrated by Ghani Madueño
Adarna House

IN the beginning, Bathala created everything on earth from the body of a man who thought he was God. From a handful of mud, Kabunian molded three persons with different skin tones; the king of birds missed his prey but opened a huge bamboo with Malakas and Maganda inside. These creation myths of the Philippines were probably told to you when you were a kid. Now it's your turn to share it with the young ones.

"Ang Prinsipeng Mahaba ang Ilong"

Retold by Christine S. Bellen
Illustrated by Liza A. Flores
Anvil Publishing, Inc.

A CURSE made the prince's nose "as long as a cat's tail." His parents protected him from embarrassment by hiring only employees with ugly noses. So the young prince grew up thinking that his nose was the norm and it was beautiful—until he got out of the kingdom for the first time and discovered that he was different. Indeed, beauty is more than what meets the eye. This is one of

Lola Basyang's stories by Severino Reyes that's been given new life by Christine S. Bellen's retelling.

"100 Questions Filipino Kids Ask"

Adarna
IF THE kids you know ask too many questions, then this book will keep them (and you) occupied. It answers questions like why cats don't like taking a bath or if aliens really do exist. Divided into nine categories with illustrations that can help its readers understand even the most complex subject, it's a sure-fire way to become the best know-it-all there is.

"Ang Binibining Tumalo sa Mahal na Hari"

Retold by Christine S. Bellen
Illustrated by Elbert Or
Anvil

WHOEVER said that a girl is incapable of kicking some royal butts has not met Sharay, a smart commoner who outwitted the king in all the tests set out for her. The book encourages the use of logical reasoning to overcome impossible tasks. If Sharay were a real person and alive today, she'd be more than a match for Prince William!

"Barefoot in Fire"

by Barbara-Ann Gamboa Lewis
Pictures by Barbara Pollak, Tahanan Books

INSTEAD of giving Pooh a proper name, her parents gave her the right to choose her own. She did. At 10, she decided to become Barbara, meaning "foreign, strange." That was just the beginning of her adventures as the little girl who thrived in Manila during World War II. For the generation spoiled by game consoles, cable television and microwave ovens, this is a must-read, must-have book.

All titles available from leading bookstores.

FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS

"The Pretty Committee Strikes Back"

by Lisi Harrison, Little, Brown
THIS BOOK is ah-absolutely, puh-sitively for the teenage Paris Hilton wannabes. In this fifth installment in the Clique series, join the girls of the Pretty Committee as they head to Lake Placid with bags filled to the rim with rhinestone-covered Keds, earth-tone-only tops and bug spray. The meaning of life will never be discussed in this novel, but it will teach you how to use glossed lips to your advantage.



"Super Fly Guy"

by Tedd Arnold, Scholastic, Inc.

READING beginners will love Fly Guy, the smart but sometimes misunderstood fly. This picture book tells of his not-so-ordinary skills of reading, understanding art and joining his friend, Roz, in school. It will remind you of "Mary had a Little Lamb." But instead of a snow-fleeced mammal, we have an insect that loves smelly mop and dirty dishes.

"Amelia's Boredom Survival Guide"

by Marissa Moss, Simon & Schuster

"LACK of fun things to do—that is an emergency!" Let Amelia tell the kids 50, er, 51 ways to kill time. A warning, though: She will stretch their imagination to snapping point. By the time they've finished the book, they would probably have a new name, new ideas for inventions, a map with new countries to explore, and so much, much more!

"Golden"

by Cameron Dokey, Simon Pulse

WOULD you believe that the real Rapunzel never had a single golden hair? That she was bald to her dying day? That she married a tinker's son instead of a prince? Here's a new twist to an old fairytale. It will change everything you know about Rapunzel, but it will also define what's true love for you and your kids, too.

"The Shadow Thieves"

by Anne Ursu, Atheneum, Simon & Schuster

THE FIRST book in the Cronus Chronicles begins with 13-year-old Charlotte Mielwetzki (pronounced Meals-wet-ski) trying so hard to be unremarkable. She raises her hands in class only once a week so that teachers won't think she's not doing her work, but doesn't speak up too often for fear of being noticed. Then her cousin, Zee, arrives from England. Children around them are getting sick and Zee believes he's the cause. Together, they try to find the cure, and that leads them to the underworld, to the squabbling Greek gods and to adventures that unremarkable Charlotte never dreamed of. But can they save the lives of the children in time?

All titles available from National Book Store



Read ...from page 4

from the prize-winning Hildawa. The titular poem exemplifies the spare efficiency of his lines. Hildawa traces the arc of art in the eye of the beholder in the places he visits, like a mall or a church, drawing conclusions from the details, such as the passage of the unknown in "Instructions for Malling": "Exit without ceremony, treading/ lightly on the floor being mopped as you pass." RSDV

"Barako, The Big Bean"

by Chit Juan and Alejandro Mojica, Anvil

LET's get this straight: Barako is a coffee bean variety also known as Philippine Liberica, not the catch-all generic that has so far meant a strongly-brewed cuppa, or the street-slang for an unrepentant macho. Or so says the Figaro Coffee Company that came out with this life history of the barako, "to save the bean from extinction," according to the authors. Since we're not coffee farmers, let's skip the agri techniques, the pest and disease management, the tips on coffee-growing and coffee taste tests that fill up two-thirds of this book, and head straight to what matters most: how to enjoy fancy coffee concoctions without the palpitations brought on by an overcaffeinated nog. Let's see: There's ice coffee bill (with egg and milk), blended with ripe mango, mixed with lam-banog and honey, and stirred with cola. The rest are varieties of barako with cream: mocha or vanilla ice cream, evaporated milk, whipped milk, mallows and chocolate syrup. Oh yes, the book. Shall we say, it's lusciously pack-

aged, ripe, robust and bursting with facts, but lacking the flavor, body and aroma that real coffee lovers seek? PAC

"Potluck: Hidalgo Bonding—A Family Heritage Cookbook"

Jaime C. Laya and Adelaida Lim, eds. Anvil

A HEARTWARMING blend of personal history, family pride, culinary skills and heirloom recipes. Through celebratory essays, five generations of the Hidalgo-Lim-Sandoval families fondly recall occasions when food became the main glue that cemented their ties over the years and across the globe. Restored sepia photographs recall a bygone era and give this book visual appeal and historical depth, while the sheer range of recipes (from fabada to dinagding to blue cheese hamburgers) give readers ample choice in kitchen practice. A bonus: You can always read the well-written essays while waiting for the soup to boil and feed both body and soul in the process. PAC

"The Home Spa"

by Melissa Pizaña-Cruz
Anvil

WE'VE all been suckered into buying those big fancy home spa how-to's, only to be stumped looking for a facial mask ingredient that's only found in some ex-

otic rainforest or Himalayan poppy field. Now, just what we need—a book of fun beauty recipes by a Pinay, with ingredients you can find in the nearest supermarket. Want to smoothen those feet? How about a home paraffin treatment with white candle wax and plastic wrap while you're taking in that soap opera? There are scrubs made from brown sugar, face masks from store-bought yogurt, oatmeal or honey, and hair treatments from coconut, olive or sesame oil. The author suggests substitutes, explains why the treatment works, and keeps the recipes very simple. The cute illustrations by Lyra Abueg-Garcellano are consistent with the spirit of fun—these aren't serious dermatological procedures, but healthy ways to relax and beautify yourself using nature's own trove of



kitchen cosmetics. As proponents of chemical-free pampering say, if you can't put it in your mouth, don't put it on your face—and almost everything in this book is good enough to eat! ABH

"Fat, Cranky, and Full of it: Funny Essays with Delusions of Grandeur"

by Sonni M. Viudez
Milflores Publishing, Inc.

PERHAPS the most hilarious book you'll read this year, "Fat, Cranky, and Full of It" gather hu-

morist Viudez's biting pieces from his Woman's Journal column. Simultaneously self-deprecating and self-absorbed, Viudez recalls the tribulations that come with growing up a smart yet otherwise helpless Filipino, reflecting on Jerry Yan, high school reunions and his addiction to chicken. It seems as though Viudez constantly has strange things happening to him—and yet he peels through the events with wit and wonder. RSDV

COMIC BOOKS AND CARTOONS

"Ang Mundo ni Andong Agimat"

by Arnold Arre, Tala Studios

A LOGICAL and well-crafted evolution of Arre's folklore-meets-modernity trip in "The Mythology Class," this graphic novel is more action-packed, faster-paced and darker than "Class." Told in Filipino and featuring crisp art, "Agimat" is an epic in a fishbowl, as Arre continues to tweak his unique take on the idea of metahumans and Filipino legends—with a good dab of superstition. Furthermore, Andong Agimat makes for a promising protagonist for future books and "Agimat" is confident proof that Arre has found a spectacular niche. RSDV

"Divine Comedy Comics"

by Steven Pabalinas
Pango Publishing

YOU haven't seen irreverent until you've read "Divine Comedy," Pabalinas's deconstruction of organized

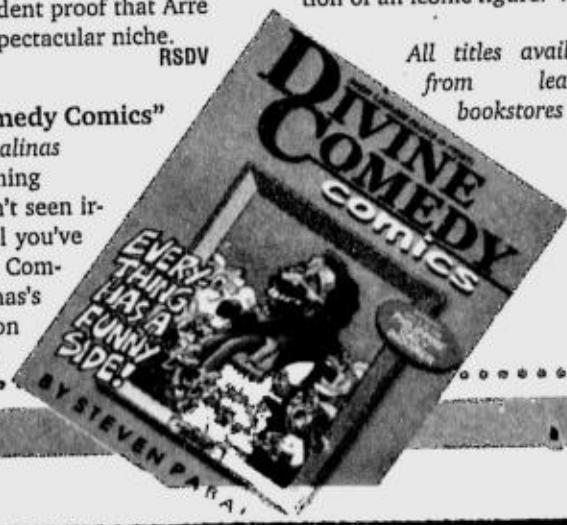
religion, history and culture as it appears in the INQUIRER's comic page. Be warned: This is not for the easily offended or the religious conservative. Ranging from the ridiculously obtuse (jokes about Charles Darwin's ancestors and the Da Vinci dress code) to the smartly skewering (strips answering the question "What if God was one of us?"), the collected material is uneven at times but so brazen, you can't help but chuckle a bit, and guffaw at the wordplay and wisecrack reinterpretation. RSDV

"Trese" # 3

by Budjette Tan and Ka-jo Baldisimo, Alamat Comics

THE BEST work yet from Alamat founder Tan, this moody mini-comic series starts out smart and gets even smarter. Investigator Alexandra Trese, holder of the supernatural secrets of the city as passed down from her grandfather, helps the local cops by tracking down the magical misdeeds with the help of her wickedly cool bodyguards, adroitly furnished by Baldisimo. The previous issues dealt with catchy ideas like a tik-balang in a drag race, but in this superlative issue, grisly murders lead to an unexpected interpretation of an iconic figure. RSDV

All titles available from leading bookstores



Campaigns & Grey

celebrates 20th year



CAMPAIGNS & Grey's prime movers



CAMPAIGNS & Grey chairperson Yoly Ong, Sen. Franklin Drilon, RMN's Ruben Canoy, Sen. Manny Villar and Neuron's Boboy Consunji



ASIA Brewery's Hubert and Michael Tan, Inquirer's Sandy Prieto, Bong Osorio, and Lamolyan's Cecilio Pedro

CAMPAIGNS AND GREY RECENTLY KICKED OFF ITS 20TH YEAR in the industry with the blessing of its bigger, brighter and more stimulating office on the 7th and 8th floors of Lepanto Building along Paseo de Roxas in Makati.

The event also marked the formal launching of Neuron, C&G's second agency, the breakaway team that promises brave ideas for brave brands; Bacon, the expert in below-the-line, customer relationship and shopper marketing; and Campaigns Social Responsibility (CSR), the champion of causes and corporate social responsibility. The three new units add muscle and firepower to the Campaigns Group which now covers an extensive range of services for its diverse clients. The other companies include Campaigns PR Inc (CaPRI), public relations and events stalwart that sparks love between brands and people; Camp Apple, electronic final art and design leaders that turn ideas into showcases; Medi-atom, the best value media planning and buying company; and Campaigns Cebu, the southern champion that provides local insight and local soul for the Visayas and Mindanao market.

Fr. Chris Kennedy officiated the mass that preceded the blessing. Angel Aquino, who appeared in a number of successful ad campaigns launched by C&G hosted the program during the cocktails that followed. As food and drinks flowed, so did entertainment provided by top-rate singer Richard Merck, theater personality Sheila Francisco from the West End production South Pacific, renowned musical group The UP Concert Chorus, and C&G's multi-talented staff. Comedian Michael V. gamely joined the staff as they rendered the Joy in My Heart jingle to the delight of everyone.

A mini-fashion show was also staged, which featured the designs of James Reyes, erstwhile C & G art director, while a psychic provided free fortune telling all night. Guests were also toured in batches around the new offices.

The presence of well-wishers that included clients, print and broadcast suppliers, media partners, research allies and friends from the advertising industry, government service and entertainment added importance and luster to the event. Among those who came by to give their support were Senators Franklin Drilon and Manny Villar, Mateo Villanueva (AdBoard), Meckoy Quiogue (GMA-7), Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (PDI) and Pepito Olarte (PDI), Jun Nicdao (KBP), Bobby Barreiro (ABC 5), Mike Manete (Philippine Star), Amar and Cherry Gambol (Electromedia), Egay Navalta and Alvin Manaca (ASAP), Gerry and Lindy Magnaye (AdFarm), Sockie Fernandez (Brew), March Ventoza (Leo-Burnett), Jayjay Calero (Zenith Optimedia), Christine Angco and Pauline Suaco (Procter & Gamble), Willie Samson, Jerri Gomez and Eileen Manuel (Del Monte), Patricia Go (URC), Michael Tan (Asia Brewery), Cecilio Pedro and Ding Salvador (Lamolyan), Inez Reyes (Jollibee), Nina Lojo (Wellcome HealthCare), Tong Padilla (Rockwell Land), Chris Feist (Antech), Martha Sazon (GSK), Jess Dinglasan (IDS Phils.), Frido Ong (Pentstar Sports), Steve Peregrino (Western Union).

Nokia launches new mobile devices



Nokia VP for customer and market operations for Southeast Asia Pacific Mauro Montanaro and Nokia Phils' country general manager Parkshil Bhasin recently met with Nokia's dealers at a forum held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Shown are the representatives from the different Nokia Store partners from Memo Ex, Wellcom, Globotel Hello, Mobile Experts, Mega Cellular, Brightpoint Phil Inc, Abenson, Com-center, Axis Global, and Silloon Valley.

Shown are Nokia VP for customer and market operations for Southeast Asia Pacific Mauro Montanaro and Nokia Phils' country general manager Parkshil Bhasin. Nokia unveiled 14 new handsets at the recent media roundtable held at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. The new mobile devices that were launched ranged from style and substance, imaging, and music which include the new Nseries



N71 and N80, enterprise devices E61 and E70, and the N91 and Nokia 3250 music devices.



NESVITA VISITS INQUIRER
Philippine Daily Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot (3rd from left) receives (from left) healthy lifestyle and wellness advocates Tricia Chiong-bian and TJ Manolao, Nesvita model, Gerard Pua - consumer marketing manager for Nesvita Pro-Heart, and Carla Rosario marketing events and promotions for Total Nesvita during their advocacy campaign for wellness in the media. Nesvita will be going around major offices nationwide between April to September for this advocacy campaign.

The search begins for Miss Avon 2006

AFTER MANY YEARS OF PAYING tribute to the Filipina beauty through participation in prestigious pageants, Avon launched the first ever Miss Avon Beauty pageant last year.

"The Miss Avon Beauty Pageant is another facet of Avon's commitment as the company for women," said Ina Quiogue, Avon Cosmetics, Inc general manager. "For years, Avon has empowered millions of women worldwide with meaningful earning opportunities and recognition programs. Avon also seriously looks after women's health and well-being by championing the fight against breast cancer. With Miss Avon, Avon celebrates not only the beauty of women but also the entrepreneurial spirit of the Avon Ladies."

The first ever Miss Avon pageant attracted hundreds of women from all over the country but of course in the end, only one can bring home the crown. And it was Jaylyn Diquiatco from the Avon Tondo Branch who emerged victorious.

Apart from cash and gift prizes and the many lessons she has gained from the experience, becoming Miss Avon 2005 has made Jaylyn one of the most recognizable faces in the country. As Miss Avon, Jaylyn has had the chance

not only to be featured as a model in the widely circulated Avon brochure but even graced the cover of three (3) issues. Her latest stint is becoming the image model for one of Avon's newest fragrances.

But more than the modeling opportunities and exposure, Jaylyn was happy to be part of Avon's breast cancer advocacy by taking an active part in the Avon Walk for Breast cancer event last



REIGNING Miss Avon 2005 Jaylyn Diquiatco graces the cover of Avon brochures which is circulated nationwide.

year. "It took me a while to get used to the Miss Avon title especially when people who recognize me from the brochures suddenly come up to me and say 'hi'. But one of the things I love most about this experience is the chance to meet so many new people and to be an active part of the Avon family," Jaylyn said.

Now, other beautiful and young entrepreneurs can have the same experience as Avon announces the launch of Miss Avon 2006 to all female FDs aged 18 to 25. Beginning April 8 to April 29, interested applicants can submit their application forms to their franchise managers. Applicants who are not Avon Ladies may go to the nearest Avon Branch and register as a Franchise Dealer.

The candidates who make it to the branch short lists will undergo a stringent selection process that will pave the way for the best of the best to make it to the Top 10 finalists. But in the end, the prestigious title of Miss Avon and the exciting prizes, trainings and modeling opportunities will definitely be worth competing for.

Unleash your entrepreneurial edge, celebrate beauty and femininity and be the next Miss Avon!

More savings from TM Power 10

IN ITS COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE NEEDS of blue-collar Filipinos, TM (the new and improved Touch Mobile) offers affordable services that enable Pinoys to keep in touch with their loved ones. Now, even more options are available with the TM Power 10: ten budget-friendly services for all your communication needs.

One of these new services is per-second charging on TM-to-TM calls, which gives big savings on short calls. Just dial 803 <10-digit TM number> (e.g., 803926XXXXXX). At only P0.10 per second, TM rates are much more affordable compared to other networks, which charge calls per minute.

For longer calls, subscribers can use TM's To-do Tawag 15/15. At the rate of P1 per minute, each 15-minute call costs only P15! Simply make sure that you have at least P15 worth of

load, then dial 800 <10-digit TM number> (e.g., 800926XXXXXX).

Another offering is the TM Power Call, which can be used to save on both regular calls and longer conversations. With this option, TM-to-TM calls are charged only P1 per minute after the second minute (the first two minutes cost only P5.50 per minute). This service does not require a special dialing sequence; just dial the number you want to call.

TM truly gives you more choices for bigger savings on cellphone calls. In addition, TM Power 10 also offers other services for all your communication needs, including lower text and IDD rates and affordable P10 AutoloadMAX. Try out all these powerful new services - only from TM, the prepaid cellphone service for blue-collar Pinoys.

SM FOUNDATION CONDUCTS OPERATION TULONG EXPRESS

SM Foundation recently donated goods to the victims of the mudslide in Southern Leyte through its Operation Tulong Express which benefited more than 1,000 families in the municipalities of St. Bernard, Liloan and Bontoc. Earlier, donation booths wherein shoppers could do their shares, were set up at the SM Supermalls. Operation Tulong Express is one of the ways by which SM Foundation reaches out to the less fortunate.



UNILAB CITED FOR PARTNERSHIP WITH DOCTORS

United Laboratories Inc (Unilab), the country's largest pharmaceutical company, was recently cited by the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians Inc (PAFP) with a Presidential Award for its outstanding partnership with the medical profession. The award, the first ever to be given by PAFP, recognizes Unilab's continuing support to the different programs of the PAFP. More than recognition, the award affirms Unilab's time-honored commitment to actively support doctors and healthcare professionals in addressing the healthcare needs of Filipino families. Shown receiving the trophy from PAFP president Dr. Reynaldo A. Olazo is Unilab professional relations management AVP Francisco Morales.

